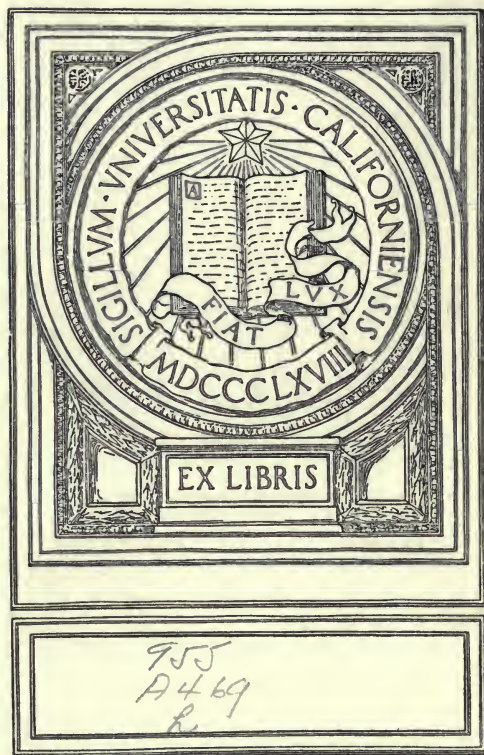


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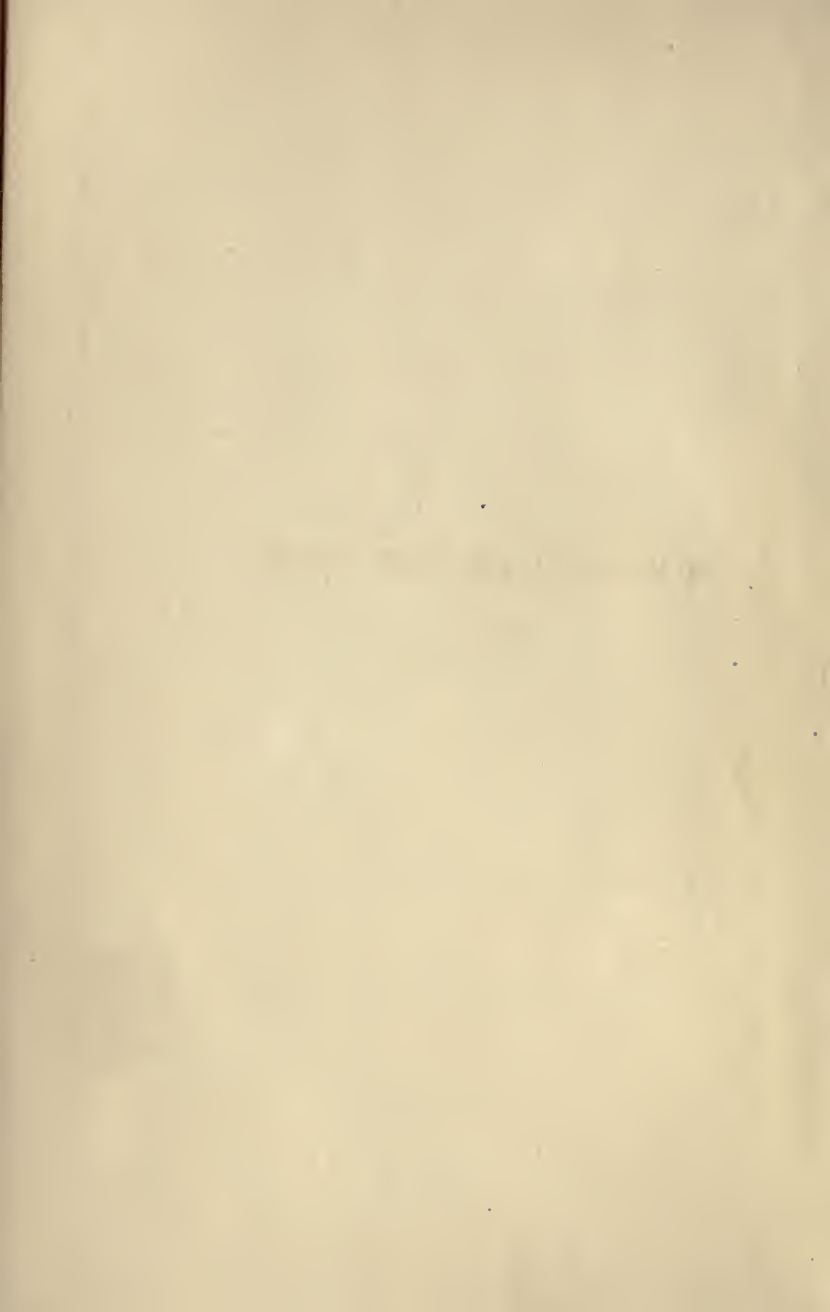


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AN AMERICAN STORY OF 1811-1815

G. E. McClure.

BY

JOSEPH A. ALTSHELER

AUTHOR OF A SOLDIER OF MANHATTAN,
THE SUN OF SARATOGA, ETC.



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G. E. McClure.

AUTHOR'S NOTE.

IN this historical romance the hero, who tells his own tale, is supposed to speak with the feeling of a Western American of his time, and not with the colder and more critical judgment of a later day. His attitude toward Europe, and particularly toward Great Britain, is caused by the events of the War of 1812 and of the years immediately preceding it, when the death struggle of Britain and Bonaparte drew the whole civilized world into war, including the United States, distant and detached though the latter was from the European system. It is admitted by all historians that the rights of weak neutrals, such as the United States then was, received no respect from either of the great contending powers, and the author believes that we had more cause to complain of Great Britain than of France, because Great Britain had more ability, and not more willingness, to do us harm. It is perhaps true also that in the early years of the century the British, as Mr. Ten Broeck remarks in the course of his narrative, showed us the worse and not the better side of their nature; and a careful study of this period confirms the author in his belief that the ill feeling once so widely prevalent in the United States against our mother country, Great Britain, now happily passing away, and per-

haps wholly removed by recent events, had its origin more in the War of 1812 and its causes than in the War of Independence. Perhaps if Mr. Ten Broeck had lived at a later time he would have modified some of his opinions concerning the parent nation.

Mr. Ten Broeck's attitude, moreover, is that of an American of the West, one who distrusts the politics and manners, even the art, of Europe, and fears that his brethren of the East have been touched a little too much by influences from that source, sacrificing some of the stronger and greater virtues for the sake of forms and refinement—a belief which many Americans who lived west of the Alleghanies held at that time. No doubt what he saw in the East gave him another view of this subject.

G. E. McClary.

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G. E. McGraw.

A HERALD OF THE WEST.

CHAPTER I.

MR. CLAY IS SPEAKING.

THE look on Major Northcote's face could not be read with ease. His eyes contracted slightly, and there was a faint twist in the corners of his mouth, but it would not have been fair to say that he was scoffing; perhaps tolerance or good-humoured indifference would have been the better way to put it, and such was my conclusion after studying his strong features. He plucked once or twice in a meditative way at his short gray beard, and then said to me:

"He speaks well for a stripling."

I did not like his use of the word "stripling," and there was, too, a shade in his tone which I thought should not have been there.

"He is young," I said, "but not altogether a stripling. He is older than either Pitt or Fox, when they became famous throughout Europe."

"True, true," he said, increasing slightly the contraction of his eye. "I had forgotten them for the moment. But he has just come out of the woods."

"And may not the woods contain wisdom?"

He made no reply, but drummed idly with his fingers, the one upon the other, while the look upon his face showed high-bred weariness. His manner annoyed me, and I would have said more, something a little stronger,

but he was my kinsman, though a distant one; moreover, the music of the speaker's voice filled my ears, and the logic of his words held my mind.

My feelings, as I listened to the senator, were very different from those which seemed to be Major Northcote's, though the reasons were good why his point of view should be unlike mine. To me the speaker seemed a hero and a prophet. Nor was I alone in this tribute to his power. No sound was heard in the chamber save his voice. The senators waited in eager silence for every word that was spoken by the youngest and greatest of them all. Hearing him, I was proud that he was a Kentuckian, and that I too was one.

He stood near the window. The heavy crimson curtains were drawn back, and the light, filtering through the squares of coloured glass, fell in softened red and blue and gold upon his face. He looked very young to be a senator, but his youth was only one of his attractions. He was tall, straight, and slender, his face shaven clean, every feature clear cut and full of expression, the whole more Greek than Roman.

The gift of golden speech is given to but few, and, of all whom I have known, to him alone in perfection. He had small use for gestures, a motion of the hand now and then, for the sake of emphasis, and that was all; his voice clear and full, each word uttered distinctly, needed no aid; its melody charmed the senses, and his logic convinced the mind.

"What is the strife of England and Bonaparte, the reckless ambition of each to rule the world, to us?" he asked. "Why should we be dragged into it when we ask for nothing but to be let alone and to build up our nation as we see fit? To France we may owe some debt of gratitude, but not to Bonaparte. To England we owe nothing but dislike and distrust. To what do kindred blood and common laws and language amount, when we have endured nothing from her for half a lifetime but insults

and wrongs? In all that time she has pursued us with a malignity to which I know no equal. In her books and newspapers she says we are without truth, honesty, or courage. She has plundered and confiscated our ships on every sea, though there is no war between us. Thousands of our sailors, taken from their own vessels by superior force, are serving on hers. Her war fleets keep watch at the entrance to every port of this country and rob our merchant vessels at their leisure, adding to the wrong every circumstance of arrogance and insult that a strong nation can devise for a weak one."

He paused for a moment, his eyes flashing and the angry blood rising to his face.

I felt my own blood flowing in a hot torrent through my veins. We of the West and South knew our enemy. We knew who had sharpened the Indian tomahawk against us to fill the border with atrocities whose full story can not be put on paper. If our brethren of the East would submit to their wrongs, we at least could resent them for them and our own too.

"He seems to feel what he says," said Major Northcote carelessly, "but doubtless he is ill informed. It is easy enough to work one's self into a passion over things that do not exist."

"They do not exist only for those who refuse to see them," I said. "To us every word he speaks is true, and the better part of England has long admitted that it is so."

"A man who endures one wrong only prepares to endure another," continued the speaker. "This is not a world of universal humanity and justice; it seems to me that at the present time it is a world of universal aggression by the strong upon the weak. What has our peace policy brought upon us but continued and more violent assaults by England? Have you forgotten the attack upon the Chesapeake and the murder of her sailors by the English, and that we have not received any repa-

ration or even apology for it, though four years have passed since that event? Have you forgotten the murder of Pierce in New York Harbour itself by the English? Have you forgotten that we have an Indian war now in the Northwest, incited and encouraged by the English? We shall never know peace until we make war with the English, and fight it through as best we can."

I wanted to applaud, to make known to all how much I liked his words and how deeply I felt their truth. The policy of turning the left cheek when the other has been smitten may be good enough for men who are willing to become martyrs and take their glory that way, but it means disgrace and ruin for a nation, at least in our day.

Major Northcote continued to drum with his fingers, and was looking critically at the speaker, as if he would put him through some process of analysis and decide to what part of the animal kingdom he belonged. He did not seem to me to take the attack in a manner becoming a United Empire Loyalist, who should have been full of wrath at these attacks upon his beloved England, more wrathful even than an Englishman, and at that time they arrogated to themselves the exclusive possession of all the virtues; while the Loyalists, being merely stepsons, were compelled to boast their attachment still more loudly.

The speaker had paused again, as if to gather his strength and ideas for another effort, while the words already spoken were making their impression upon the minds of the senators. The faces of some, the greater number, showed appreciation and belief; others shrugged their shoulders or turned their eyes away, as if the orator had violated preconceived opinions. None applauded, nor did any express dissent by word or noisy movement. The chamber was quite still, waiting the will of the speaker, for in those days our Senate considered gravity necessary to its being.

Where we were the talk was all of war; outside we saw nothing but peace. The scrub oaks and alders that covered the marshy ground between the Capitol and the White House nodded in the sharp February breeze. Some negro boys played lazily in the half-made and muddy streets, and the smoke rose from cabins which still defied the advance of the newly decreed Capitol. Two men on a hanging platform were at work on the white sandstone walls of the President's house. Beyond shone the broad Potomac, but around everything converged the wilderness, almost primeval, creeping up even to the walls of the Capitol and the White House, and thrusting long arms of bushes and dense scrub between the buildings of the Government, isolating and surrounding each, as if threatening to return and reconquer the little ground that we had won with so much use of the axe and spade.

An old man, a senator from New England, took advantage of the pause and rose to question the speaker.

"Suppose we declare war on England, how are we to make it, Mr. Clay?" he asked.

Major Northcote looked at him with a slight increase of interest.

"Really, that is not an impertinent question," he whispered to me. "There is some disproportion—is there not?—between the armies and navies and military resources of Great Britain and this country. It might be well to inquire into it."

I knew the disproportion, but I said with some heat:

"It is because of this power, and because she thinks us so weak, that Great Britain has inflicted so many wrongs upon us. This is your great and glorious nation, your leader of civilization, a mere bully!"

He spoke soothingly of my youth and prejudiced sources of information. He thought that when I was older and had seen more of the world I would change my opinions. Then both of us stopped talking and

waited to hear whether the speaker would reply to the question of the New England senator.

"It is true," he said, "that England has an abundance of military resources, and we but few. But we can increase what we have, and justice and the spirit of the people are on our side. And if we do not fight, it is certain that our condition, bad as it is now, will grow worse. At a given point the limit of human endurance is reached, and we have reached it. We have tried protests, embargoes, and every device but the sword, and all have failed. Is it better to submit peacefully to ruin, or to make a fair fight for a place among the nations? I tell you, gentlemen, there is nothing left but the sword, and we must try its edge if we are not to be crushed."

Borne on by the force of his feelings, he shook a long forefinger in the face of the assembled senators, and his voice rose as he pronounced the last words. More than ever I marked its curiously penetrating quality. It swelled steadily and easily in volume, filling the room and making its own echo once and again in our ears.

I was lifted up by the enthusiasm of his words, and I began to hope that fortune might be induced this once to incline to the side of right, and not of might. The sense of our wrongs grew sharper, and I wished the declaration of war to be made before we left the chamber.

"It is true," I repeated to Major Northcote; "every word that he says is gospel truth. We must fight to live, and since Britain, who should be our best friend, is our worst enemy, it is she whom we must fight."

He smiled gently, like a man who would restrain himself under any provocation, saying that a declaration of war by us would at least be rash, and his manner at that moment was irritating, whether or not he intended it so.

The debate continued with increasing heat, though the courtesies were always preserved, the Western and Southern senators desiring war, while those from New England and some of the Middle States were as emphatic

for peace. I could not understand the minds of the New England men.

The old New England senator, then speaking, had been eager for armed resistance to all the might of England over a small matter of taxation forty years before, when we were but a fringe of colonies on the seaboard; but now that we were an independent nation, with numbers twice as great, he preached non-resistance and submission, while England armed the Indian tribes against us, impressed our sailors, plundered and confiscated our merchant ships, blockaded all our ports with her fleets, and had even fired into one of our war ships, taking advantage of a condition which rendered her unable to resist. Yet, with no visible sense of shame, this old man stood there and pleaded for the cause which he had made his, alleging our weakness, the lack of an organized army, and the enormous risks we would run, although forty years before he had taken no thought of these things, when the risks were greater.

I looked at the Vice-President to see which side was his choice, but Mr. Clinton gave no sign that he inclined to either. He leaned back in his chair, facing the Senate over which he presided, and his plump red face, with its thick fringe of gray hair, was sunk almost between his shoulders. The coloured lights from the windows played curious pranks with his broad face, now turning his red cheeks to yellow, tipping his nose with blue, and then giving him a wide band of scarlet across the forehead. But he listened as if half asleep to all the talk, while his gavel lay motionless in his hand. Mr. Clay had resumed his seat, and was reading some letters a messenger had brought to him.

“While it is true that we have suffered wrongs,” said the New England senator, “we have every proof now that the peaceful policy is best for us; England has promised to stop the impressment of our seamen and the seizure of our ships.”

"Do you believe that promise?" asked Mr. Clay from his chair.

"Certainly," said the New-Englander.

"I have just received a letter from New York," said the Kentuckian, "announcing that a fleet of five ships which sailed from that port three months ago, loaded with grain for the Baltic, has been seized by the English and confiscated under a pretended violation of their Orders in Council, their paper blockade. Does the honourable senator still preach submission?"

Then the debate became hot, the war party increasing in fire, and the resistance of the peace party becoming feebler.

"The nation of which you boast so much is a nation of robbers; you have just heard a fresh proof," I said to Major Northcote.

"It is a necessity," he said excusingly and still without anger. "We can not permit any trade that would contribute to the strength of the arch-villain, Bonaparte."

"The robbers' plea of necessity added to the robbers' practice," I said, wishing to speak plainly.

"I am afraid we can not agree on that point," replied Major Northcote smilingly; "and since we can not, the debate probably has ceased to be of interest to us. Suppose we go?"

I had come only at his request and in order to bring him, since in virtue of my own office I had privileges in the Capitol not always accorded to the public. But I was willing enough to go, and slipping unnoticed from the chamber we sought the air.

"An unfriendly visitor might take this as a true type of the nation," said Major Northcote, as he marked the unfinished building, the smoke driven by draughts through the corridors, the loose skylights which dripped water when it rained, and the general air of chill and discomfort.

"You can not expect a nation to come forth finished in a few years, any more than you could expect a building like this to be completed in a few days," I replied.

I resented his slur, slight though it was, upon our Capitol. To me, despite its incompleteness and discomforts, which would be remedied, it seemed beautiful and grand. He did not reply, and we walked in silence down the new-cut road, which we called Pennsylvania Avenue, between the cabins and clumps of alder bushes toward the White House. The February wind was sharp, and we shivered in our cloaks. The sight of the cabins and the bushes and the mud puddles which gave such point to Major Northcote's remark depressed me, but I was cheered when I looked back at the Capitol. It rose grand and white in the brilliant sunshine, the unfinished portions hidden by the distance, and in its majesty seemed to me to typify the coming greatness of our nation, which had fought so hard for its place, and still had a good fight to make.

I kept these thoughts to myself, knowing how Major Northcote would receive them, and we picked our way between the mud puddles down the avenue toward the White House.

If one did not see completion, one at least saw effort, for at times we passed brick-kilns and the temporary huts of the labourers. There was, too, a brisk sound of hammering, and of timbers creaking against timbers as they were lifted into place, which was encouraging and told of future results. I thought once of calling my kinsman's attention to the grandeur of the situation, the swelling hills, the expanse of slope and level, the fine river, but I concluded it would be better not to do so; he would fail to appreciate them, and most likely would reply with some slight sarcasm which would sting all the more because of its faintness.

It had been my purpose to go to my room in the Six Buildings, on the road from the White House to

Georgetown, and prepare a letter for the Kentucky mail. We clerks in the departments had been forced to find quarters where we could, and Washington was not a town of homes then; but, profiting by the advice and influence of some friends, I had fared well and secured a cosy place. Major Northcote, I supposed, was going to the building occupied by the British ministry, now without a minister since the departure of the intolerable Jackson, and under the charge of a secretary, but before I could leave him I saw Cyrus Pendleton approaching, the man in whose graces I wished to stand well, though I feared to the contrary just then.

He came with the long, easy stride which marks the man of the West, used in the earlier days to walking vast distances through forests impervious to horsemen. Every line, every movement of his tall and spare figure showed strength and the iron endurance of the borderer, though he was fully sixty years of age, and had passed through more hardships than fall to the lot of the ten-thousandth man.

He greeted me in a manner marked by cold courtesy and constraint. I had been a favourite with him once when I was a boy, and perhaps I would have been yet had I not paid attentions of some warmth to Marian Pendleton, for whom her father had other and more ambitious designs. I was sorry, too, that he saw me at that moment with Major Northcote, whose opinions were unpopular in Washington, and whose companionship might be considered to my prejudice by Cyrus Pendleton, a hater of England, though I might plead the tie of kinship, which is very strong with us of Kentucky.

He gave my kinsman a slight nod, a matter for which I did not care, but I resented a little his cold manner to me, and in a spirit into which perhaps some malice entered I told him of the ships confiscated in the Baltic by the English, and I added that one of those ships was

the True Blue, on which I knew he had shipped a valuable lot of furs for the Russian market. He expressed no grief at the loss of his goods, but his eyes blazed with anger at the name of the robber nation, and he said that the sooner we declared war upon England and ran the risk the better it would be for us—a position which he had taken long ago and defended always.

Major Northcote received the attack with his usual calm, and looked at Mr. Pendleton with an air of ironical superiority which could not be other than galling to any man. The two were in strong contrast, each a perfect type of his own: the Westerner thin, big-boned, alert, clean shaven, darkened by weather, an accent peculiar, dress careless, the whole type new and original; the Loyalist ruddier, European to the last touch, his attire elegant and careful, his bearing easy, graceful, and indifferent, the advantage of manners wholly on his side, save in the important particular of sincerity.

“Mr. Pendleton is angry,” he said. “There is nothing like a personal loss to influence one’s political feelings.”

“Perhaps,” said the Westerner with composure; and then to me, “I see, Philip, that you are willing to listen to both sides.”

It was an allusion to my companionship with Major Northcote, a hint that I might not be faithful to the West, and, giving me no chance to reply, he walked on with swift steps, an impatience, due no doubt to his encounter with Major Northcote, showing in his stride. One of his strongest characteristics was his hatred of the English power, which never kept faith with us, and so often fought us with the methods and weapons of savages. Nor was he unlike the other people of the West, as I knew them, who hated the English as the English of Elizabeth’s time hated Philip’s Spaniards, and for reasons similar in nature. The tide of our dislike of

Great Britain was rising far higher than in the Revolution, and with even greater justice.

As he walked up the slope leading toward the Capitol I saw a short, broad-backed man, whom I knew to be the French minister Serurier, overtake him. I could guess, too, his object in joining Mr. Pendleton, for the Frenchman, like everybody else in Washington, was aware that the Kentuckian was a man of wealth and influence, and he wished to urge on in him, as in all others, the growing hostility to Britain.

It may seem strange, but I felt a bitter resentment toward the Frenchman, who was merely seeking to push us along the way we wished to go; but it was our business, and not his, and his interference, or that of France, was an impertinence. In fact, we had little cause to like France then—as little as we had to like England. We owed France a debt, but it was in abeyance in those years, and I wished we were strong enough to give England and France a beating at the same time.

The two walked slowly up the steps of the Capitol. The Frenchman had taken the American by the arm, as if they were friends of a lifetime, and was talking to him earnestly. Thus they passed into the building, and bidding Major Northcote good day I resumed my journey to my quarters. I was a clerk in the Treasury Department, one of the two or three that were needed, for we were truly republican in our simplicity then, as I hope we are yet, but my work being finished in the morning, Mr. Gallatin had kindly given me leave of absence until the next morning.

The day was late, the dusk was beginning to show in the east, but in the west the sun was a great blazing ball. The red light fell in broad bands across the river, and its surface shone as if with fire. The Virginia hills and forests on the other shore were edged with red, and tree and slope glowed alike in the shining twilight. The red tints faded into pink, which in turn grew dimmer as the

sun sank lower; then the darkness came and hid slopes and hills alike, with only the river gleaming through it, a band of silver.

Around me were the clatter of metal and the chatter of cheerful voices as the workmen on the new buildings put away their tools and started for home. The February wind was rising. It was chill in the night. I shivered, and, walking briskly to keep myself warm, went to my home in the Six Buildings.

CHAPTER II.

A LADY AND OTHERS.

THE Six Buildings was crowded, for Washington was hard put to it then to hold the Government, small in numbers of men though the latter was. It was a large structure, complete in its ugliness, but the lights of candle and hearth fire were beginning to flame from the windows and cast bright streaks across the clumps of bushes and the heaps of fresh earth thrown up by the shovels from new streets. It was a cheerful sight, telling of warmth and comfort within, and I hastened to my room on the second floor, where I found that Cæsar, the black boy bound to my service by various presents of silver coin of the republic, had provided well for me.

It was a small room with two windows, in which the white wooden sash rattled loudly when the wind was strong; a rag carpet partly covered the floor, and print pictures of General Washington and Mr. Jefferson, pasted on the plastered walls, looked across at each other. But a fine fire blazed on the brick hearth, and the hickory logs popped most merrily as the blaze ate into them. Moreover, Cæsar handed me a warm glass of water and something else, a habit we have in Kentucky, and which I hope I have never abused. When I had drunk the grateful mixture and drawn a chair up to the fire, Cæsar gave me a copy of the National Intelligencer and went out, leaving me to interest myself in the news as became one who lived in times that were full of stress and change.

The first thing in the type that my eye alighted

upon was an account of the new Indian war in the Northwest. It was likely to be the most formidable, so the newspaper said, in all our long list of conflicts with the red men. As was well known, the Northwestern tribes were the most valiant on the continent, and the English agents from Canada were visiting them at their villages, bringing presents of whisky and money and guns, and urging them to take up the hatchet against the Long Knives, as they called us. The great chief Tecumseh, and his brother the Prophet, revered by all the tribes as the wisest and most powerful of medicine men, were eager for the war, and while one spoke incessantly for it, the other made medicine, and always drew from his spells the omen that the time had come to destroy the Long Knives, and their women and children with them.

I put the paper down, the reading of the article ended, and stared into the fire, wondering how we would meet the new danger. I knew also that there was to be a great rising of the tribes in the Southwest, and thus we would be belted round by a ring of enemies, white and red, by land and by sea, and, if we declared war on the English, would have to struggle in good truth for our lives. It seems to me that no nation has been forced to fight for existence as ours, even from the first settlements at Jamestown and Plymouth. What with the English and the French and the many warlike tribes, we have found it wise to keep our guns loaded and beside us; and of all our enemies, we have found the red men of the forests the most wary, the most daring, and the most to be dreaded. Many a winter's night have I, a little boy sitting on the hearthstone in my Kentucky home, gazing into the red coals, listened to my mother's tales of the scalping parties, and how they would come down from the North and attack in the darkness and silence. I would tremble on my stool, and creep closer to my father's side as I heard the whistle of wind and rustle of trees outside, and would think that the war parties had

come again, though the last to visit our region had gone long since.

I have learned that it is not well for one who wishes to keep a cheerful and balanced mind to sit alone and nurse his wrongs; and, improving my toilet in the manner that my intentions demanded, I threw a cloak over my shoulders to protect me from the cool night air, and went out.

The raw little city, which by day rose only in spots from wood, bush, and swamp, was hid by night. The wilderness reclaimed its own in the darkness. The unfinished walls of the Capitol glimmered faintly from their hill, a blur showed where the Treasury stood, and darker splotches on the ordinary darkness marked a few of Washington's scattered buildings. Some points of light, one or two from street lamps and the others from the windows of houses, twinkled feebly, as if they were making last and useless struggles before the invading night.

I was accustomed to all this; in truth, I had known nothing better, and one who has ridden all night over muddy paths, through endless forests, thinks but little of unlighted streets. But on this evening the rawness, the incompleteness of everything, discouraged me and gave me a sense of personal mortification. I knew well, without any tedious process of self-analysis, that it was Major Northcote's manner in the Senate chamber that had put the poison in me, the half-concealed sneer, the faint suggestion of contempt that passed quickly over his face as if he would hide the slight affectation of aristocratic scorn which was so galling, because there were certain aspects of time and place which supplied some cause for it. Just then I was not disposed to give the proper credit for what had been achieved, great though it was when our difficulties and the fewness of our years were considered.

But I recalled my thoughts again and turned them toward one of the points of flame which seemed, to me at least, to twinkle more steadily than the others. This

light shone from the house of Cyrus Pendleton, a conspicuous two-story wooden structure which had been built by one of the Notleys, great landowners in that vicinity, long before the Government had thought of founding a capital there. As I approached I saw other lights, and I concluded that I was not the only guest who had come. Cyrus Pendleton himself received me at the door. He wore black broadcloth and very white linen, above which rose his brown and seamed face. He could afford broadcloth, but he had worn tanned buckskin much oftener in his life, which had known many hardships and dangers. His manner to me at that moment was a curious mixture of welcome and suspicion, as if he were glad to see me and yet preferred that I would not come. I understood it, though pretending not to notice, from the double motive of policy and pride, and inquired politely, after the custom, about the health of his daughter and himself.

Then I passed into the house, and the old man followed me, his manner still bearing traces of embarrassment, as if he would detain me.

The room into which I had come was large, and everywhere showed a woman's taste and supervision, though there was one feature which no visitor could fail to notice. Most conspicuous over the mantel were a rifle and an axe, crossed. The rifle had a beautiful carved stock and a long, slender barrel of fine steel, highly polished. The axe was of heavy steel, with a long, strong handle.

"There, Philip," Cyrus Pendleton once had said to me, "are the weapons which we Americans should always keep before us, for with them we are winning the New World, which will all be ours some day if we want it. I used that old axe myself many and many a time, and that rifle is the best comrade I ever had. An American's toast should be to the axe and rifle, which are his real coat of arms."

Marian was coming toward me. She wore a flowered

silk dress, and falls of creamy lace were about her throat and wrists, setting off their whiteness. In her hair, which was drawn up in the Eastern fashion, sparkled a jewelled comb. A brilliant complexion is perhaps the distinguishing mark of our Kentucky women, who are all kissed by the sun, but I thought I had never seen a face that equalled Marian's that night. The red in her cheeks deepened perhaps a little at my coming, but the trace of embarrassment in her father's manner was not in hers as she gave me her hand and bade me welcome, calling me by my first name. I saw her cast one swift glance at her father, and there seemed to be a note of defiance in her look. My heart warmed and my blood thrilled at this look more than if she had given one of another kind to me instead, for I knew that the defiance, or what I took to be such, was made in my cause.

I took a chair beside Marian. Bidwell, the man whom I disliked, dressed in the extreme of the European fashion, which he had learned in London and Paris, was on the other side. He must have taken his cue at some time from Cyrus Pendleton, for he said to me in a languid tone, though I could see easily enough the sneering meaning in his words:

"It seems that the Government, even at the most critical periods, does not work all the time, but takes its ease on occasion like other people."

I would have made some sharp reply, for the intent of offence was manifest in his manner, but Marian's eyes met mine in a warning look, and she interrupted lightly:

"Let the Government take care of itself; we will talk of other things."

The look which she had given me, which had indicated a confidence, a feeling between us not shared by others, was sufficient to reward me for silence and a failure to reply to Bidwell's sneer, and I spoke of such light topics as the time afforded—of "Tom Jones" and "Evelina," and Mr. Irving's ingenious Knickerbocker's History

of New York, and the latest dances that had come from Paris, where the court of Napoleon was acquiring new splendours and the old French taste for gaiety was blossoming again.

There were two ladies from the North present, the Misses Constance and Fanny Eastlake, handsome and of fine figure, but not so fair of complexion as our Kentucky women; and Mercer, of Tennessee, my friend, a thin, dry man, two or three years older than myself, who had spent a year or two abroad and knew the world to criticise it, wherefore he was now a lawyer in Washington; and two or three others of the capital's society.

Cyrus Pendleton came over to me presently and began to scoff at what he called the Government's indecision and cowardice, for he, like all our people of the West, was eager for war, sure that we could redress our wrongs only on the battlefield—an opinion which I shared though, owing to my position in the office of the Secretary of the Treasury, I was more chary in expressing it. As I have said, I have never seen a man animated with more hatred of the English, especially the ruling classes of England, though he and all the other rich men of Kentucky were seeking to build up in our own State a baronial and landed aristocracy, precisely like that which their ancestors had left behind them in the old country. That I knew to be the chief reason why Cyrus Pendleton looked with so much favour upon Bidwell, whose many acres adjoined the five thousand within a ring fence that were his own. The prospect of extending that five thousand so easily was too tempting for a man of his ambition to overlook.

Marian stood near her father for a moment, and the contrast between them, despite their resemblance, struck me with curious force: he so rugged and seamed, she so fair and gentle, yet with the same expression of strength and courage. But it should not have seemed strange to

me; we see it throughout the West every day, fair daughters of rough fathers.

"Handsome, isn't she?" said Mercer in my ear.

"You think so?" I replied.

His face flushed faintly, much to my surprise.

"One has no choice; one must think so," he replied in his dry tones; "but remember, Philip, my boy, that there are other handsome women in the world, and the old gentleman has not chosen her for you."

There seemed to be a suggestion of warning in his tone, and of sympathy too. Which preponderated I could not tell, and I affected to notice neither, though I could not account even to myself for the faint tinge of red that had come into his face when he spoke first.

I left early, before any of the others, and Marian, after the custom, accompanied me to the door, giving me her hand as I stepped out and permitting it to rest in mine for an infinitesimal moment.

"Marian," I said, "I may continue to come?"

"Until I bid you stay away."

"Which will be never, I hope."

She smiled, and I walked away in the darkness, but before I had taken half a dozen steps I looked back and saw that she lingered for a few moments in the doorway.

She stood there, the lights of the room shining upon her, all else in darkness, like a picture illumined from above. The smile was still on her face, and I believed that it was for me.

Do not think I was over-sentimental, but my years were only twenty-four, and there are moments in every man's life then that he wishes to remember.

The door closed and the darkness became complete, but, far from being oppressed by it, I felt a certain exhilaration and I trod with light step. The night was cloudy but cold, and, not caring to return just then to my bare little room, I turned into Pennsylvania Avenue and walked toward the Capitol.

Mists and clouds were gathered around the lofty walls of the unfinished building, yet the faint gleam of white stone and marble showed through the veil of vapour, though all the rest of the city was buried in darkness, save for the few lights that glimmered far apart.

My mental elation communicating itself to my muscles, I felt less than ever like sleep, and the brisk cold, too, inciting me to physical exertion, I walked on up Pennsylvania Avenue, avoiding the pools of water and the mud holes. Street lamps burned dimly at two corners, their lights flickering in the February wind, but I thought little of these things and continued swiftly on, the Capitol emerging from the clouds and mists as I approached, though its walls still remained shapeless and undefined, lofty columns of vapour against the darker vapours of the night.

CHAPTER III.

FROM THE OTHER SIDE.

I WALKED up the hill toward the Capitol, because it was a favourite stroll of mine, whether by day or by night. I suppose that every one has a desire to be alone at times, to feel the full force of Nature, and there was no place in Washington more solitary, seemingly more abandoned by the world, than the Capitol at night. When the darkness covered the rawness and newness of everything, it was easy to fancy that the unfinished walls were not unfinished walls at all, but the crumbling ruins of an old temple, and the scattered houses that lay below the remains of an ancient city. While we of the West did not trouble ourselves much about old times and old things, but gloried rather in the newness and freshness of our country, yet it pleased me to do this now and then, for I had read the old histories, and I missed sometimes the glamour of ages, which the commonest country of Europe had, and we had not.

I ascended the last slope, and on my way passed the lone watchman of the building, who knew me, and, returning his nod, I entered the portico. The watchman, continuing his round, was soon hidden from my sight by the walls, and I stood alone looking down at the town, and seeing but little of it. I knew one dim shape to be the Treasury, and the dark line was a row of trees that shut out the White House. I could calculate just where the Pendleton house stood, but no light shining there, I supposed that all the guests had now gone home. There

were but a few signs of life, and the whistling of the wind through the trees was like one of the ordinary noises of the wilderness. When the gusts struck the stone walls of the Capitol they curved around it with a moan and a shriek, and my fancy to make it an old ruin, haunted by the winds, was never more vivid.

I turned my eyes from the town, and they caught at the far end of the portico a gleam of scarlet. It was faint, just a flash, and then gone, but it was enough to attract my curiosity, and I stepped lightly down the portico, intent to see.

I was convinced that it was some one in a red coat, who had no business about the Capitol, and being in the Government employ myself I felt that I had in some sort as much right as a watchman, for instance, to follow the wearer of the coat and see who he might be and what he intended there. The gleam of scarlet was hidden by one of the pillars, and stepping behind another column I waited for its second appearance, which was delayed but a moment.

Major Northcote stepped from the shadow of the pillar, and I was sure that I heard him speaking in a low tone to some one, being strengthened in this belief when I caught a glimpse of a figure disappearing at the end of the portico and into the darkness beyond. Yet I could not say with absolute certainty, since the night was so black and one's eyes were liable to deception. But of Major Northcote there could be no mistake, as he came forward from the shelter of a pillar and stood near at hand where I could see him very well, and in all his splendour.

He was dressed in the brilliant red, white, and gold uniform of an officer in the British army, his epaulets heavy with gold braid and tassels, and a jewel-hilted sword which I coveted at his side. He wore a large black cloak lined with red, which was thrown back from his chest, revealing the red interior of the cloak and the

facings of his uniform. He seemed to have adorned himself with his most splendid attire, as if he were a young man preparing for a festival; and in truth I had noticed before that he was fond of fine clothing of brilliant colours—a taste which I confess to having myself to a slight extent, due perhaps to that touch of the Southern sun which we feel in Kentucky, and which they say breeds the love of colour.

He came toward me without any trace of hesitation or embarrassment, his face, so far as I could see, expressing only welcome and good breeding.

“And do you, too, walk alone at night, Cousin Philip?” he said in his full, mellow tones. “It is the best time to think, and I have come here, for where could one be more solitary than within the shadow of this Capitol building of a nation? But I was growing lonely when I saw you; now we will stay a while together.”

His manner was so graceful and easy, so natural, so full of cheery good humour, that it seemed impossible for his words to be false, and yet the faint sneer at the nation made me distrust him for the moment.

“Come,” he said, taking me by the arm, “let us walk together while we talk.”

I yielded to the influence of his manner and asked him nothing about his presence there, which, untimely as it seemed, despite his explanation, was not a matter that I had any real right to question. He was silent for at least five minutes, and I was silent too, waiting for him to speak first.

“Philip,” he said presently, “you are my kinsman, and I can speak to you plainly.”

I bowed.

“And in confidence?”

“If I ought to retain it so,” I said, growing cautious. He laughed a little.

“That was a statesmanlike reservation,” he said, “and I think well of you for it.”

I could not tell from his manner whether he meant it as a compliment or a gibe, and I was silent.

"Yes, Philip," he continued, "you are my kinsman, and, distant as the relationship is, I wish to remember it, for I have some of that feeling of kinship which you Kentuckians cherish."

"I am flattered," I said.

"And I am glad to observe," he continued, without noticing the interruption or my manner, "that you show more wit and spirit than most of those around you."

"Shall I take that as a compliment to myself, or a slur upon my countrymen?" I asked.

"I am speaking seriously, and because I am interested in you," he replied with some rebuke in his tone. "I am an old man and I do not jest."

I was silent, for I felt that his manner had the advantage of mine, and I did not wish to appear the inferior of anybody in wit and presence.

"This is a convenient time and place for me to say to you what I wish," he continued. "You and I were together to-day, and we listened to your Mr. Clay."

"He spoke words of wisdom."

"Not at all—not at all! They were the words of a young enthusiast blinded by his own ignorance. He spoke of making war upon England; of this country, without an army or a navy, divided into many factions and scattered over vast distances, declaring war upon Great Britain, the greatest power in the world, greater even than Bonaparte, despite the vast military machine that he holds under his hand. One could not believe such monstrous folly did he not hear it urged daily and know that it would be done."

"Then war is sure to come?"

"Certainly; not in a month or six months, perhaps, but in its own good time."

"And the result?"

He lifted his head with a peculiar motion of pride,

and a triumphant flush swept over his face. I knew well what the answer would be, and I felt a sickness at the heart, for he seemed to me at that moment, in his resplendent uniform, with his red-lined cloak thrown back from his shoulders, his sword at his side and his figure drawn up, to typify the haughty and arrogant nation which even then was all-powerful wherever Bonaparte was not, and with all his power the emperor could not pass the line of English ships that belted Europe in.

But Major Northcote's show of triumph was only for a moment, a mere passing flash, and he answered in a quiet tone without any emphasis, but all the more convincing because of it:

"There can be only one result, and it will be even more sweeping than you expect, for you must know the disproportion between the two nations. These colonies will be returned to their old allegiance. Colonies they are! You can not call this a nation!"

He made a gesture of contempt toward the city that lay in the darkness below, and then another to the walls that rose above us.

"Is this a capital, Philip?" he asked; "a muddy village in the woods, and some rough stone walls between which farmers meet and make what they call laws?"

"They will be finished," I said; "both the capital and the Capitol."

"Never!" he replied, speaking with emphasis, and in such a tone of conviction that I could not fail to be impressed. "England will soon claim her own again, and we exiles of Canada, American by birth, but sons of England yet, will come back with her. When we were building new homes in the Canadian woods we never forgot our old ones here. You have heard of the Moors in Africa, who still keep the keys of the houses of their ancestors in Spain?"

"But the Moors have never gone back to Spain."

"You can not say they never will. But it will not be long before the English flag will wave here again. England is the greatest power in the world. I am not boasting. Can not you see it? Look at her! Has she ever been beaten by anybody?"

"Yes, by us. You forget our own Revolution."

"But an incident that will be reversed. She never fails. No nation in Europe can prevail against her. She is always victor in the end. She broke the power of Louis the Great. She has driven France out of America and India. The navies of France, Holland, Spain, and Denmark have crumbled to pieces before hers. Bonaparte, too, great as he seems, must yield to her, for England grows stronger every day she fights, since her trade, her agriculture, and her manufactures go on the same in peace or in war, and meantime France becomes weaker. When Bonaparte is crushed you will be left to confront England alone."

He spoke with the greatest fervour and his air of indifference was gone, leaving me to see the soul of this man and his dearest ambitions, a man who knew the world, both that of Europe and that of our own country, and the relative power of nations. I had seen perhaps more of these things than most people of the West who had not the same opportunities, and understanding them thus there was no reply that I could make to him just then.

"If I believed in omens and prophecies and cared for dramatic illustrations," he said, resuming his easy and careless manner, "I would point to the clouds and vapours which hang over this capital and tell you that it is doomed."

"I do not think so," I said, though I had been affected deeply by his predictions and the more substantial array of forces to support them.

"You know the only possible result of this war," he said, speaking again with emphasis and a certain enthu-

siasm like that of a young man. "And why should you care?"

"I care very much."

"A mere passing phase of feeling, soon over. Why should you care, I say? You are a young man of sense and spirit. You have ambitions, political, perhaps of high place, the right of every young man. What sort of a stage does this country offer to you? Suppose you reach the presidency itself! Merely the chief farmer among a crowd of rusty farmers talking at your cabinet meetings about the crops and the sordid cares of a small nation that has no cultivation and no interests beyond the most primitive. This country is only a fringe of settlements in the woods of a vast continent. The great world is yonder in Europe. But when Britain comes back and reclaims her colonies, you become an Englishman. You will be in the British Empire, and you can play your part upon the greatest and most brilliant stage in the world. Is not the exchange worth while? What have you to lose? Nothing! To gain? Everything! With the British Empire restored and whole, with this country to receive England's surplus population and to aid her and re-enforce her at every turn, that empire will rule the world, a wider and greater world than ever acknowledged old Rome as mistress. What a destiny for the Anglo-Saxon race, and do you not wish to have your part in it rather than wear your life out here? Republics are tawdry, mean, commonplace. An aristocracy must govern if a country is to be governed well."

I confess that I was dazzled for the moment by his picture and the manner in which he drew it, but it was my imagination only, and not my judgment, the better part of me, that was overcome. Nor was the thought new to me, and I had heard other Americans speculate upon the future might and grandeur of the Anglo-Saxon race had it remained united, though the quarrel between the two branches was daily growing more bitter and I was one

who shared in the strongest prejudices against the old country. Wishing to know the point to which he would lead, I asked him why he said these things to me.

"It may be that I said them to enlighten you," he replied with cynical emphasis. "You are my kinsman, and perhaps I might wish to help you in the good time coming when an allegiance to the Government that meets here, if not too warm, would not be remembered against you. The British service will be open to its citizens of American birth as freely as to any others. Americans, the exiled Loyalists, have already won many honours there. The army and the navy swarm with them. They are serving in India, with Wellington in Spain, everywhere."

I thought that he would tempt me with the promise of a splendid career under the empire to some service that no honourable man could accept, and though the great world of affairs which was Europe was not less attractive to me than to him, yet every impulse in me rose in rebellion against the future that he predicted. I would have been no true son of the West had it been otherwise, and the feeling that we were right and must prevail, however great the odds against us, re-enforced all the training of my youth and associations of my whole life. I said that I admired England, the England of Elizabeth and Cromwell and Orange, and not the England of to-day, which had lost all sense of right in its struggle with Bonaparte for the leadership of the world, nor did I think that conquest and extension of dominion should be the greatest aim of a people.

His manner changed again at my reply. Except in his rare moments of enthusiasm he seemed to have himself under perfect control, and now he turned to light irony, designing to make everything around us or in the country appear vain and idle, skilfully choosing the things which contained a grain of truth and exaggerating that grain manifold. He made me feel uncomfortable,

sometimes a little ashamed, and I should have left him at once, but he interested me and I felt able to take care of myself. Seemingly he wished to make me forget what he had said about the future glory of Great Britain and the Anglo-Saxon race, as if he had been merely drawing a picture on a slate for our amusement and would now rub it out and let it go. He began to ask me about my ambitions, what I proposed to make of myself, and how I regarded my prospects, turning his tone again from raillery to seriousness.

"You would marry some day?" he said.

He asked the question so suddenly that I was confused and silent.

"You need not answer," he said. "I can see and I use a kinsman's freedom in speech. The lady's father does not choose you, but in the future of which I spoke a little while ago he would be glad to do so. Come, let us go; the night is growing late and it is cold here."

He drew his cloak more closely around him and we descended the hill, picking our way with care along the rough road and keeping a watchful eye for the mud puddles and stray heaps of building materials. The path narrowed, and just at its narrowest place we met a man in poor attire, probably a belated workman returning to his hut. There was room for only one on the firm ground, and Major Northcote, who was in advance, thrust the man with a careless bend of his elbow into the mud and passed on, unheeding the other's curse, while I followed him. I was ashamed of myself, ashamed that I had listened to him so long on the hill, for now I saw the kind of world that he wished, the age of Louis XIV again, with a splendid and glittering aristocracy riding triumphantly on the necks of the people; it would be neither sordid, mean, nor commonplace for the aristocracy, but wretched only for the unconsidered others; something which no American should wish, and which the free-born English race itself had rejected.

He bade me good night with his usual courtesy and show of good will and went his way to the British embassy, while I went mine to my room in the Six Buildings, not wholly pleased with myself nor wholly blaming.

CHAPTER IV.

A MEETING BY THE RIVER.

I AWOKE very early the next morning, and according to my custom began a brisk walk in the fresh air which would make me strong and buoyant for the day's duties.

It was not much past daybreak, but the men were already at work on the new buildings, and I could hear the ring of hammers and the thud of axes driven into the wood. The air was crisp and stimulating, and my interview of the night with Major Northcote, when he would have tempted me with a place in a world more splendid than my own, but perhaps not so good, seemed like a bad dream. The people around me were nearer the earth than his and more akin to true humanity. Never had I been more sure that we were right and the glittering monarchies of Europe wrong.

I met Mercer at a corner of the street and asked him what had happened at Cyrus Pendleton's house after I left.

"Nothing," he said dryly. "Why should anything have happened? Mr. Pendleton was angry, Mr. Bidwell sullen, and the lady defiant, all because of you. Was not that enough even for Mr. Ten Broeck?"

He spoke rather more curtly than usual, but passing quickly on his way he gave me no chance to inquire into the cause.

The river, with its wide and shining sweep showing green and blue and silver in the shifting light, invited me, and I strolled along its banks, as yet primitive in most

part in their wildness, though we had begun to build a shipyard at one point and a wooden wharf at another. Still, when I turned my back to the town it seemed to belong to the wilderness. Forest and bush covered the farther shore; on the dim horizon was a slight dark line which must be the rising smoke from a squatter's cabin, yet one could easily imagine that it was the trail of an Indian camp fire; a negro in a boat came in sight, letting his rude dugout drift with the stream, and I could have made him an Indian warrior, his own canoe the leader of a long and silent file. Everything seemed so new, so like the wilderness, so unlike civilization and the old towns of the coast.

I followed a footpath that led along the shore. A flight of wild ducks not yet used to the sight of the city, nor sure that it would stay, shot down in a slanting line from the sky and settled upon the surface of the river. I remembered my boyhood's practice, and picking up a little stone made it skim and ricochet along the surface of the water near the ducks. They rose with an indignant squawk, and, rising higher and higher, flew away toward the north, following their leader in a file as direct and straight as the flight of an Indian arrow. I watched the straight black line cutting the sky, while it grew dimmer and dimmer until my eyes could not have seen it had they not followed its flight from the beginning; then it disappeared altogether and the sky was an unbroken blue.

I resumed my stroll. Fifty yards ahead of me I saw a smallish man walking very slowly. His shoulders were bent and his hands were crossed behind him. The wisps of hair which showed under the brim of his hat and clung to the back of his head were gray. He wore dingy gray clothes, and his coat, much too large for him, was shoved up so high that its collar met the wisps of gray hair and took all shape from his figure. I knew by his bent shoulders and hesitating steps that he was in deep

thought, and I concluded that the trouble which could send an old man walking that way by the river side at such an early hour must be of a serious kind. I would cheer him up. It is the custom in the West, with rich or poor alike, to be friendly with strangers whom we overtake or who overtake us, going our way.

I shouted to him, but he paid no attention. I called again, but he continued his slow, meditative stroll, his hands still crossed behind his back. It seemed to me, since I was in a very good humour, to be too early in the day for a man to have so much thought and maybe care, too, on his mind, and walking more swiftly I soon overtook him.

"Good morning, stranger," I said, putting my hand on his shoulder, and I felt as if I had to reach down to do it. Even in Kentucky, a State of large men, I am called large. "You must have much on your mind this morning, if one can tell anything from the way you walk."

He turned and smiled up at me, for I towered some good inches above him.

"Perhaps I have," he said, "but since I have your company I may be able to throw it off, at least for the present."

My face flushed until I knew it must be blazing red. I bowed with the deepest respect, and likewise with some humility, since I wished to appear well always, and my pride was hurt.

"I beg your pardon for such familiarity, sir," I said. "I did not know that it was you; I did not think of it."

"Then I am glad that you did not know," he replied, still smiling pleasantly at me, "for otherwise I would have missed the pleasure of your company. I needed to be taken away from my thoughts this morning, and I am glad that you overtook me. Come, we will walk together and you can tell me about yourself."

He took my arm, leaning slightly upon it, and we walked on together. The sting of my awkward little act was taken away and I felt honoured.

"You hear often from your State?" he asked me presently, for he knew me well. Our Government was so small then that one might know every official in Washington by face.

"Yes," I said.

"Tell me about the war feeling there."

I told him all I knew; I described the indignation of the Kentuckians when they heard of the repeated outrages upon us by Great Britain, and how this anger had been increased by the approaching Indian wars. I felt so deeply on this subject, my feeling increased maybe by the revulsion of my mind against Major Northcote's allurements, that perhaps I became warmer than I should have been in such company, though I was not ashamed of my warmth.

"They think out there, sir," I said, "that we have reached the point where to endure more is disgrace."

He said nothing, but looked troubled. His face was worn and tired, and his frame seemed to be suffering from exhaustion.

"It's hard to know what to do," he said presently. A minute or two later he turned the talk to matters not connected with government or politics and asked about my father. He was at his home in Kentucky, I said, and still well and strong.

"I met him once in the war, the Revolutionary war," he said, "and remember him. It was just before he marched south with Greene, and I did not see him again, as he went to Kentucky when the peace came. What was your mother's name?"

"Northcote," I said. "She was of a New York family."

He looked at me sharply.

"Northcote!" he said. "Was she related to Gilbert

Northcote, the Loyalist, who is in the English service here?"

"He is our distant cousin."

"An able man; one who has seen much of the world, but a dangerous man too I think. I trust that you do not talk too much to him, even if he is your kinsman."

He looked very keenly at me again. I bore his look without flinching, though my conscience gave me a wrench.

"We can never agree," I said. "He is my cousin and I can not forget the fact, but that is all."

"I should think you could not agree with him if you followed your father in belief and action," he said. "Mr. Ten Broeck fought through the Revolution, and did he not bear his part, too, in the wars with the Northwestern tribes after he went to Kentucky?"

I said yes, and I began to tell him of my father's deeds, being proud of his warlike record, a pride that I preserve to this day. I told how he had fought at the Blue Licks when the Kentuckians rashly dashed into the river in pursuit of a foe ambushed on the other side in overwhelming numbers, and suffered defeat, to be made ever glorious by valour and unparalleled self-sacrifice. Then he was with St. Clair when the raw army was surprised in the dense winter thickets by Little Turtle and the Northwestern tribes, and he had told me many a time of the awful massacre and the mad terror, exactly the same as that which befell Braddock and the British forty years before. He was at the Fallen Timbers, too, with Wayne when we found revenge under the guns of the British fort itself for St. Clair's disaster and drove the beaten tribes farther into the Northwest. I told these deeds of my father, warming to the tale as I proceeded, and when I ended I said:

"My father, who has fought them both, says the Northwestern tribes are more to be dreaded than the British. He says that with equal arms, equal discipline,

and equal ground we ought to beat the latter, man for man."

But he would not be led upon that ground. He was silent again, and his worn, weary face was very thoughtful. The curve in his shoulders increased and he leaned more upon my arm. We came presently to a turn in the path.

"I must go back now," he said, "but I am glad that I met you, Mr. Ten Broeck, and I am glad that I have had a chance to talk with you about your father, who was one of my comrades more than thirty years ago. Tell him when you write to him or see him next that I hope he holds me in as much esteem as I hold him. Good morning, Mr. Ten Broeck."

"Good morning, Mr. Madison."

He turned and went back.

I stood there and watched his bent figure as he walked slowly on, until it was hidden by the trees and the bushes.

I think it is the greatest thing in the world to be President of the United States, but I knew that I was far happier than he and I felt sorry for him.

I was saddened a little, but the feeling soon disappeared under the influence of the bright morning and the crisp west wind. The broad and clear river, the far hills and the forest stretching away until they disappeared under the horizon line, appealed to me and reminded me of the land in which I was born and had grown up. The wild free breath of the endless outdoors crept into my blood, and for the moment I despised roofs and cramped offices. I wished to be back in my own Kentucky, to see the long, easy sweep of the blue grass, and rolling hills of the pennyroyal, and the swelling slopes of the mountains, close-grown with beach and oak and hickory, down which the clear brooks dashed and spattered and gleamed afar like streaks of melting silver.

I felt for the moment a repugnance to my desk in a

Government office, however it might help my prospects and however well it might serve as a means for learning the ways of the great world. We Kentuckians were then children of the open air, of the hills, the valleys, and the woods, and we are yet as much as ever and will remain so. It is in the blood; the houses trouble us; they are good enough to sleep in when the winter nights come, but by day we want outdoors with its illimitable room. That is why we grow so large and strong and live so long.

I looked at my watch and saw that it was time to hurry to my office if I would not be late, and Mr. Gallatin had been too kind for me to neglect his work in that manner, even if I were disposed to be careless of my own interests. I walked swiftly and was soon at the Treasury building, where I was glad to see that I had arrived before my chief.

Mr. Gallatin was late, not coming until I had been there a full hour, and he was usually a prompt man who trod on the heels of his clerks. When he arrived at last I noticed that he too looked worn and worried, as much trouble showing in his face as had been visible in Mr. Madison's. He unlocked his desk near a window, pulled up his chair, and began to prowl through piles of papers. Those were troublous times for the Secretary of the Treasury, who was a really great man. There were many bickerings in the Cabinet, which contained some men not at all great, and the Treasury itself, with embargoes and Berlin and Milan decrees and Orders in Council and what not cutting down our trade and the Government receipts at the same time, had to be watched with untiring care. The most of us wanted war, and there was not money to pay for it. They say the pen is mightier than the sword, but the purse is mightier than either—yes, mightier than both together.

His look of trouble remained. He was a heavy, broad man, and his face was broad in proportion, so there was plenty of room for the expression of trouble. His head

was quite bald on top and shone resplendently when the sunshine came in at the window and gilded his bare dome. On the sides of his head the hair was rather thick and fell in tousled locks over his ears. He tugged at these now and then in his impatience and worry.

There were only three of us in the office—the Secretary, a clerk named Chilton, who was a Connecticut man, and myself. We worked all the morning in silence, and when I would raise my head at times to peep through the window, the earth outside, though still in the brown gloom of February, looked very inviting. But the Secretary never took his eyes from his papers. He read on and on, as if there were nothing in the world but scribbled parchment. Two or three messengers came in with letters; he never looked up; they put their letters on the desk beside him and went away, and by and by he opened them in their turn and read them. The time for dinner came, and wearied by the long morning's work I hurried away with the eager step of a boy. Dinner was then in Washington what it still is with us in the West, the noon meal, the heaviest in the day, and with those who rise as we do with the dawn, it is likely to remain such.

There was a new boarding house on Pennsylvania Avenue, and I took my dinner there with other clerks, some congressmen, three or four senators, a naval officer or two on shore duty, and a few professional men. We sat around a long table and passed the things to each other, for the two girls who were supposed to do the waiting could not keep us supplied. We had food in plenty, though I suppose most of it might be called coarse in countries where cookery is a delicate art, but it was not considered so by us. Meat, which makes people strong, was the staple, and of this a large proportion was game, venison and squirrel and wild ducks. for one does not have to go far from Washington to reach the hunting grounds.

I took my customary seat at the table with Mercer on my right, while on my left sat Felix Courtenay, a special friend of us both, a South Carolinian, the son of a Revolutionary hero, and descendant of hard fighting Huguenots, a brown-faced fellow with straight black hair. There were others of my age with whom I was in the habit of associating: Sanford, a tidewater Virginian, a tall, thin man, a little yellow in the face, showing that there was a touch of malaria in his part of the country, though he would never admit it. Sanford had a lot of family pride. He boasted that five generations in a direct line took his family back to a royal bar sinister, which, I believe, is the last proof of nobility in England, and on that account he patronized all Kentuckians, saying they were merely an offshoot and younger branch of the old Virginian stock, which may be true. Nevertheless, Sanford was a most zealous republican, an inconsistency I have long since given up trying to solve; I see it too often. Next to him sat Wilson, a stout squarely-built Pennsylvanian, and on the other side of the table was Adams—Arthur Adams, of Boston, who was of kin to old President John Adams, and, of course, to his son John Quincy Adams, who was to be our President too some day, and to all the other famous Adamses of Massachusetts, who must be nearly a million in number, and he could never forget it. But the most of us were Westerners or Southerners.

The talk very naturally turned upon our troubles with England and France, especially England, since the last seizure of our vessels had been made by that country, and all, except the Federalists of New England, had begun to look upon her as our chief enemy, forced to such a belief by the threatening events which were occurring almost every day. The views of these men were very different from those of Major Northcote, and it was easy to see that the things which were his ambition could never become theirs. Only one voice was heard to pro-

test against the general condemnation of the old country, and it was that of Adams, though he objected mildly and soon became silent in the face of the fierce attack that he invited.

The conversation was interrupted by Wilson, the Pennsylvanian, who produced a bundle of English newspapers come over in the last mail.

"I've a trading uncle over in London," said Wilson, "trying to get some satisfaction for two ships of his seized in the Baltic by English cruisers and confiscated more than a year ago. He sent me these papers to show what lovely things our kind and affectionate blood kin are saying about us. There's the Courier and the Times and the Post; in fact, all the London papers and a dozen or so from the provincial cities. I've marked the articles about us. Would you like to have me read some of them?"

"Yes, yes! read them!"

"Which will you have first?"

"Read something from the Courier," said Courtenay. "That's their ministerial organ and perhaps we can tell from it what their Government thinks."

"All right," said Wilson. "Here's an editorial article on our financial honour, or rather our lack of it, as the Courier thinks or pretends to think. Listen!"

Then he read a lot of trash which made my blood hot, trash and lies though I knew it was, and I think that every one present must have felt as I.

"There is no honour among the merchants and traders of the United States," said the newspaper. "They are trying to build up a great commerce and great wealth in defiance of the powers of Europe, and they stop at no falsehood or trickery to achieve their purpose, and they know nothing of the sacredness of contracts."

A full half column closed with a strong appeal to the British Government to crush utterly this impertinent trade, which was proving so annoying to bluff and honest

Britons. "Let the mistress of the seas," said the paper, "prove that she really and truly reigns over her own."

"That isn't so very bad," said Mercer. "It's mild compared with some others that I have read. I suppose we ought to recognise that all the seas, including the bays and inlets that have the misfortune to project into our own country, are England's exclusive and private property, and we should get a permit from her every time we presume to set a ship sailing over salt water."

"It's come to that already," said Sanford. "I've seen her fleets watching at the entrance of the harbours of New York and Norfolk, and I saw them bring in the dead sailors whom she murdered on the Chesapeake."

The senators and members of the House were silent, thinking, perhaps, it was best for them not to discuss such affairs in so promiscuous a company, but I could see the flush of anger on some of their faces, and as they made no criticism of our proceedings I suggested to Wilson that he read more.

"Here's an article from the Times," he said. "'Barbarians' is the pet name of the Times for us. This one is on the ridiculous pretensions of the 'barbarians,' and has special reference to our navy. That ought to be of great interest to you, Charlton."

Charlton was a junior naval officer on shore leave just then.

"Read it," he said, all attention.

"I'll condense it for you," said Wilson. "The Times says in effect that while all the pretensions of the American barbarians are ridiculous, the most ridiculous of all is the idea some of them seem to have of making war upon Great Britain. It calls attention to the fact that the British fleets upon the American coast already outnumber the whole American navy at least five to one in ships, guns, and men. It says that in case of war not an American ship would dare to come from port, and Eng-

land could have nothing to fear from a few bundles of fir planks under a striped rag."

Charlton was red with wrath.

"All we ask is a chance against them, ship for ship!" he cried. "See what we did against the Barbary corsairs and against the French in '98! If Mr. Jefferson hadn't been so crazy with his gunboat policy we would have a fine fleet now, and could make it a war on their shores, and not on ours."

Wilson read the other articles. They were all of the same kind, full of savage abuse and direct falsehood, or a kernel of truth swelled into a mountain of untruth. It is a fact that after failing to conquer us in our Revolutionary war the English set out to defame us before all the world in their books and their newspapers and through their public speakers, and now they affect to wonder why so many of us do not like them. I admit that we had many friends among the English—the best nation in Europe in spite of all that has happened—but they could not make their views heard amid the storm of abuse.

I felt pained and depressed. I was one who had been willing to see the old breach between England and us caused by the Revolution healed up, and the two Anglo-Saxon nations go forward as friends to a great destiny, and that it was not so, I believed, with all others of the West, was almost wholly the fault of England. It seemed a bitter thing to me that the fiercest and falsest abuse of us should come from the land of our ancestors, and I felt my anger against England rising, though I could not forget the great deeds of her history, and that often she had been the champion of liberty and freedom in Europe—though not then.

Not caring to hear more, I left the table and went out into the fresh air. Mercer overtook me there and showed that he was in a sour humour, saying that all of us were for war with Great Britain and we wished it declared at once, but made no preparations to fight it. He sup-

posed, so he said, that we had reached the summit of human wisdom and could carry on war victoriously without an army, navy, or military resources. It was one of the virtues of the new republic to overcome everything with enthusiasm, which would stop no cannon balls.

"Nevertheless," he said, "the people are for war, and so are you and so am I; we are all fools together."

I left him to vent the rest of his ill humour upon whomsoever else he might meet, and returned to the office, where I found Mr. Gallatin ahead of me, and with documents already a foot deep around him. The thoughts of most people in Washington must have been on the same subject that day, for after an hour of hard work, in which the silence of the room was interrupted only by the rustling of paper and the scratching of pens, Mr. Gallatin turned suddenly to me and said:

"You are in favour of making war on England, are you not, Mr. Ten Broeck?"

"Yes."

He said not another word, but I noticed presently that the character of the papers he passed over to me for classification and filing was changing, and seemed to bear upon the topic that everybody was discussing then. A document that crinkled in my hands as I smoothed it out was a petition from the people of Ohio for two additional regiments of regular troops to help defend them against the expected attack of the Northwestern tribes.

"A legitimate request, is it not?" said the Secretary carelessly.

"Yes."

"So the Secretary of War thought, and he referred it to me, as I am expected to furnish the money to pay for the regiments. Of course you, as my clerk, know where the money is to be found."

"No, I do not."

"Hm! That is bad. What is the manuscript which you are tying up so carefully?"

"A recommendation to the Government, signed by most of the substantial people of Baltimore, that, owing to the probability of war, we ought to begin at once the construction of six line of battle ships. They say that these ships would be useful as a peace measure; that the fear of them would deter our enemies from attacking us, and if war should come anyhow they would be extremely useful for fighting."

"Very well put. A line of battle ship would cost about a half million dollars, and six would cost three millions. Not quite so much as our whole annual expenditure, but an addition nevertheless. Of course, you could find the money for these ships in the Treasury, could you not?"

"No."

There was no satiric twinkle in his eye and no curve of his mouth to indicate humour, but I knew well his purpose, for he continued to pass to me documents which showed our want of money to do the things that the country demanded—demands often reasonable, even wise enough, had there been any one to pay for doing them. I understand his motive now better perhaps than I did then, for I know that there come times even to old men in high station when they wish to justify themselves in the eyes of youth. After these brief comments he was silent until the moment for my going came, when he said:

"I've let you see this afternoon some of our difficulties. Come with me to-night and I will show you why this country needs diplomacy and tact. There is to be a Cabinet meeting at the White House and we will need a clerk. You shall serve and be silent. You can do both, I believe."

I assented with the greatest willingness to what was an order rather than a request, and closing my desk with the feeling of a schoolboy whose day at his books is over, bade the Secretary good afternoon, and rushed out into the sunshine. The wind was coming from the south-

west now and was warm. Though it was February there was a suspicion of spring in the air. I thought I could see tender green shoots nestling in the dry grass, and on the trees across yonder I was sure the buds were beginning to come.

The sun was setting in a cloudless sky, and the big round globe was all red flame. Everything caught the glow and sent it back. The windows of the Capitol blazed with fire. Common wooden houses turned to castles and palaces. Bars of light fell across the river, colouring it red and gold in the sunshine, leaving it gray and dark blue in the shadow. In the far sky a flock of wild geese flew northward.

It was beautiful to me, who had been shut up in a room since morning, and I walked about in the fresh air, meaning to enjoy it as long as I could before going to the Secretary's house in order to accompany him to the Cabinet meeting. Without laying any such plan in my mind I found myself in five minutes walking before the house of Cyrus Pendleton. Two horses were hitched at the gate, and Marian and Bidwell were passing across the lawn together toward the front door. I had no claims of proprietorship over her, no actual words of love had passed between us, and yet, at the moment, I felt a pang of jealousy. Fortune had made the way so easy for him: the old man, her father, was continually his ally, and the sense of obedience and loyalty was strong in her. All these things might wear away any resolution. But they saw me, and she tossed over the fence to me a little bunch of evergreen that she held in her hand. I pinned it on the lapel of my coat and passed on, thinking for the time but little of wars and the rivalries of nations.

CHAPTER V.

A CABINET SESSION.

MR. GALLATIN was living then in a boarding house, his family being absent in Philadelphia, and he had but two rooms, only one of which was carpeted. It was at these rooms that I arrived ahead of time, though I had to wait but a few minutes until he put on his cloak and we started toward the White House. His boarding house was on a street so called, but really an unfinished road. At the corner, where another road intersected it, an old oil lamp flared in the wind, but there was no other until we approached the grounds of the White House. The roads were still muddy from the rains, and the Secretary proposed that we strike across the fields, as the white wings of the Capitol shining through the darkness would serve for guidance.

We walked along in comfort through the grass for some distance, and then we encountered a thicket of alder bushes, through which I broke a way with my large body, the Secretary following after. On the other side I was about to plant my foot in a pool of muddy water, but I drew back in time. A dog in the backyard of a negro cabin howled dismally at us, but unheeding him we passed on and came to a rail fence, which we were forced to climb.

"I don't think we made much by our short cut," said the Secretary as he sat panting on the top rail.

"We've kept out of the mud at least," I said, perching myself on the rail beside him.

A bell tinkled close by, and a little boy driving some cows home to a late milking passed near us.

"Maybe they've been grazing in the Capitol grounds," I said. "I'm afraid we're rural and raw, Mr. Gallatin. It's no wonder the Europeans make fun of us, is it?"

"What if they do?" he replied quickly. "The European nations have made manners and not morals the standards of right. All things must have beginnings. You can not tame a continent in one year or a hundred. If our capital is not as large and fine as the capitals of Europe, it is because we have just begun it. If our manners are not those of courts and seem rough and repellent to the Europeans, our morals are better than theirs. We do not make a joke of woman's virtue; we do not make seduction the chief triumph of a gentleman's life; we call the morganatic marriages of their princes what they are, licensed adultery; we call their diplomacy by its true name, the art of skilful lying; we do not have one set of laws for the strong and another for the weak; we do not teach that work is ignoble; and we give opportunity to all, which is the greatest of all rights. I am an European myself by birth and education, and know the truth of what I say."

We climbed down the fence, feeling carefully for a footing on each rail, lest it might give way with us, and reaching the ground in safety continued our journey toward the President's home.

The White House rose out of the dusk, though the walls showed but dimly through the trees. Only one window was lighted, and the building seemed as quiet as a farmer's house when all have gone to bed. Certainly there was not much fuss or ceremony here. We heard a step on the walk and saw a dusky form in front of us. We hailed the figure, and it proved to be Mr. Eustis, the Secretary of War. Then we walked together into one of the White House porticoes, and seeing nobody there to receive us, knocked loudly at a door. It was opened

by the President, who carried a lantern in one hand, and apologized on the ground of sickness for the absence of the black boy, James, who usually attended to the door. At that moment another black boy arrived—from the kitchen, I suppose—and the President gave him the lantern, telling him to tend the door and hold the lantern in a good position, in order that it might light the other members of the Cabinet to the proper place.

“It’s really needed,” he said, “for Mrs. Madison is visiting in Georgetown, and everything about the house has gone awry. Mr. Smith doesn’t see too well, and I want him to be sure to find us, for the meeting is very important.”

Then he led the way to the Cabinet chamber, and with his own hands gave each of us a glass of excellent Madeira—very good and comforting after a walk on a chilly evening.

A long table occupied the centre of the room and around it were cane-bottomed chairs for the members of the Cabinet. I drew up another chair, and made ready with my quills and ink and paper for the notes and memoranda which I was to make.

The President took his seat at the head of the table, and each man produced papers from his pocket, which he stacked neatly in front of him. It had been a long time since I had seen such a formidable array of documents presented to anybody for consideration. Then they began to discuss them. They were of all kinds, complaints from the governors of States that the Federal authority was assuming too much; pleas from the West and Southwest for assistance against the new and hostile leagues of the Indian tribes; more pleas of American sailors impressed by the British, dozens of them; and reports from our agents abroad, indicating the increasing hostility toward us of Great Britain and the Continental nations, and a general belief by them that the United States had no rights which they need respect.

"We've long ago had proof of that," said Mr. Eustis. "They regard us as interlopers in the world, because we are new and they think they are privileged to plunder us when they choose. They will continue to think that way until we fight some one or more of them."

We heard the wheels of a carriage on the sanded drive outside.

"I suppose that is he," said Mr. Gallatin in a rather grim tone.

I was impressed by the way he said it, and wondered who the "he" was.

"Yes," said the President, "and he is likely to be more majestic than ever to-night. There is nothing quite so grand as these Frenchmen when they are puffed up with victories and power. He will undoubtedly come, bearing all the glories of Napoleon on his own shoulders. That is why I asked him to address to us this communication at a full Cabinet meeting; we do not wish to be overpowered individually.

The black boy opened the door and announced that M. Serurier, the French minister, though he did not pronounce it that way, had arrived and would be pleased to see the President of the United States and the gentlemen of his Cabinet at their earliest convenience.

The President of the United States and the gentlemen of his Cabinet would be pleased to see M. Serurier, the French minister, at once; and hence M. Serurier, the chosen representative of the only polite nation and of the great and glorious empire of his Majesty Napoleon I, was shown into our humble, rural presence. M. Serurier had neglected no precaution to make himself great. His uniform was a miracle of fine cloth, brilliant colours, and gold lace. His cocked hat, which he held proudly and stiffly in his hand, illuminated the room. His black hair shone with some fine ointment, which made it curl up in most ferocious and terrifying fashion. The sword which hung at his side, and seemed tempted

to swing between his legs every time he took a step, had a hilt of gold set with gems and jingled fiercely.

His Haughtiness the French minister, the servant of his Imperial Majesty the French Emperor, gave one of his finest bows to each of those present, except myself. He knew me very well, but he was too much of a French gentleman to waste a useful bow on a clerk in the Treasury Department.

"We are glad to see you, M. Serurier," said the President politely. "Won't you take a glass of wine with us?"

I jumped up, poured out the wine, and handed it to the minister. He drank standing, and was asked to take a seat, but seemed to prefer that martial and impressive appearance which can be preserved only in an upright position. I watched him, determined not to lose a word or gesture. I believed that this was the beginning of what Mr. Gallatin had brought me to see.

"You said, M. Serurier," began Mr. Madison, "that you had received written complaints from the emperor against our Government, and were instructed to push them personally."

"That is correct, your Excellency," said the minister. "I am instructed by my master, the emperor"—I hope that if any representative of our Government abroad speaks of the President as "his master" somebody will kick him—"to complain of the great partiality the Americans are showing for the English, his enemies, helping them in trade, furnishing them with food and other supplies, and thereby showing a desire to assist them to succeed, whereas France has always been the friend of this country, which owes to her a heavy debt of gratitude."

I was astonished, but the same complaint of our giving friendship and assistance to the English was made by Napoleon more than once. In those days the English robbed us and kidnapped us on the ground that we

were once colonists of theirs, speaking the same language and of the same race, and the French treated us nearly as badly, all the while reminding us that we owed them a debt of gratitude for assistance in the Revolutionary war.

"The emperor, then, thinks that we are showing partiality for England?" asked the President.

"His Majesty is convinced, and is deeply grieved at such a policy from those who he thinks should be the friends of France."

A faint smile appeared on the worn features of the President.

"Mr. Smith," he said to the Secretary of State, "will you read to M. Serurier the protest which we received three days ago from the Prime Minister of Great Britain? Will you listen, M. Serurier?"

M. Serurier shrugged his haughty shoulders and signified his assent.

The Secretary of State took from the heap a large paper, liberally stamped with the arms of England, and began to read. It was an energetic protest against the undoubted partiality which the American Government was showing for France in the present struggle between that power and Great Britain, feeding the armies of the French despot and usurper, giving them sympathy and otherwise comforting and strengthening them in their attempts to crush Great Britain, the defender of the liberties and freedom of Europe and the sole bulwark of the oppressed.

"The king," concluded the Prime Minister's letter, "regards with the deepest grief such a policy from those who are of our own blood, who speak our language, who are really our children, and who should assist us to maintain the liberties of the world against the tyrant and usurper Bonaparte."

M. Serurier listened with a supercilious smile.

"Perhaps we are guilty on both counts, M. Serurier," said the President with his pale little smile; "that

is, of undue partisanship for the French as against the English, and also of undue friendship for the English as against the French, but for the present we must deny either."

"The charges of that wicked and perfidious nation, Britain, are not to be believed for a moment," said M. Serurier, making his sword rattle a little, as a threat against England and not particularly against us, I presume; "but his Majesty the Emperor Napoleon is too great to speak anything but the truth. Your Excellency, shall I report to him any answer to this complaint?"

"State to the emperor," said the President, "that his report has been received and will be considered."

M. Serurier bowed again, but not as if he liked the answer.

"I trust," he said, "that your Excellency will not forget that France has always been the friend of this country, and gave it invaluable assistance when it was fighting England for its freedom."

"We will not forget it," was the reply.

M. Serurier was asked to take a second glass of wine with us, and he unbent so far as to do so. Then he bowed again, and took the majesty of France out with him. We heard the wheels of his carriage rolling over the sand, but the worn old men said nothing further about him, and resumed the discussion of questions concerned with the finances and the internal state of the country. I guessed that Mr. Gallatin had brought me there to show me how we were pulled about by both England and France, and were subjected to the most ridiculous accusations from each, but he used me for work too. Those old men sat in that room, hour after hour, discussing ways and seeking means, and trying so hard to make two and two equal to five. I have come to the conclusion that it is a weary task to found a nation, especially when there are several others already in existence which think they have an exclusive claim to the title

and the rights conferred by it, regarding you merely as an intruder to be clubbed and kicked and stripped whenever it may so please their high mightinesses.

Midnight came and I thought it was time to go home, but no such thoughts seemed to enter the heads of those anxious old men. I became a machine, animated by a will, but nothing more. I made notes in the proper way, but as I finished each I could not have told what I had written. Sleep tied forty-pound weights to my eyelids, and it required a tremendous effort to keep them from shutting over my eyeballs. Sometimes they would go down, but I hauled them up again with a jerk. The room became misty; the walls would drift several miles away and then pass out of sight altogether. I remembered myself sufficiently once or twice to reflect that one pays for the honour of going to a Cabinet meeting, but the old men talked and debated on, until at the end of a large slice out of eternity they began to roll up their papers, and some one—a truly great man he must have been—said it was time to go home.

I felt depressed for some days after the Cabinet meeting, being still desirous of war with Great Britain, convinced that it would be just, and yet seeing more clearly than before our difficulties and the great odds which we would have to face. Nor was the course of my friends such as to encourage me. I met Major Northcote, and while he did not allude to the conversation at the deserted Capitol, his manner had a somewhat stronger savour of irony, even of triumph and complacency, as if he had warned me of the coming crash, and having offered me safety, even reward, his whole duty was done and his conscience clear. Mercer was a little more cynical than usual, perhaps bitter, and Cyrus Pendleton was distinctly hostile. I heard that he had spoken of my apparent friendship with Major Northcote, and had endeavoured to turn it to my discredit, though I was convinced that his act proceeded from other motives.

But a turn, or rather an interruption, was given to these thoughts by the arrival of several of the Western Indian chiefs, whom some of our commissioners had induced to visit Washington in the hope that they would be impressed so much by the power of the Long Knives and wisdom of their Great Father that they would refrain from the proposed war upon us. I was supposed to understand wild nature, being from the West, and Mr. Gallatin delegated me to the task of helping in the escort of the chiefs about Washington; I as well as the others selected, for I was only one of several, being expected to see that the country's greatness lost nothing at our hands. Yet we seemed to make little progress, and when we took them one day to the Capitol, and I spoke of the imposing appearance it would make when completed, the oldest of the chiefs asked me if that completion would ever come, in a manner so much like that of another man who once had asked me the same question that I was startled, and began to believe that some one, an enemy of ours, was tampering with them. And I knew well the man who was our most active enemy in Washington.

The next day was Sunday, a period of freedom for me, and soon after the noon hour I was in that part of Washington in which Cyrus Pendleton's house stood. Marian came out presently, and when I joined her we walked slowly through the city and up one of the gentle slopes, from which we could see the town and the river. Ours was not a secret meeting in any sense, though both of us knew that Marian's father, however much he might like me personally, did not wish me to become a member of his family. It was with a full knowledge of this that I walked by Marian's side, and my mind was under the influence of opposing emotions. I knew her respect for her father's will, as we in Kentucky have been bred largely in the old English custom of obedience to our parents, and yet I believed that it was not she who would choose Bidwell, even if she did not choose some other

whom I could name. The prospect of war, too, was growing more threatening every day and threw a depressing influence over us all, those who opposed it and those who wished it alike.

Below us the little city peeped out of the woods and bushes, and beyond shone the wide river, both full of peace as we saw them from the hill. Some of the earliest and tenderest buds of spring were appearing, for the warm weather comes soon in the latitude of the Capitol.

Marian spoke of the war which we Western people expected and wished, and said that it seemed a sad alternative when a nation was compelled to redress wrongs by such a method. But I defended our cause, though knowing well the difficulties of the Government, and repeated our old and in fact unanswerable argument that nothing else was left to us. She replied with a woman's tender forethought that it must mean death for many and sorrow for more, and I began to urge our cause in spite of such sufferings with so much zeal that I forgot my own peaceful character as a civilian, and told why war was necessary sometimes, citing old instances in history and telling how a nation frequently came out of the fiery trial stronger, freer, and better than before. A few of my arguments were my own, but the majority I had borrowed from others, the leaders of our party, and borne on by my enthusiasm I spoke with such fervour that I may have seemed to her a sort of everyday apostle of military triumph and glory.

I stopped abruptly, for I saw her looking at me with sad and yet not reproachful eyes, and my own zealous speech ceasing she asked me if I would go to the war when it came. I had made up my mind long ago on that point, and I answered without hesitation that I would go. I think that every woman is anxious for any man for whom she cares—Marian and I had been children together—to fight for his country if the country needs him,

and yet she is loath, too, to let him go, looking further than man does to wounds, misery, and death.

Knowing this truth, I watched Marian's face as I told her my intention. She looked away toward the town and the river, and her lips seemed to me to tremble, as if she would speak but restrained herself. I was on the verge of saying something, which perhaps I had come to say, despite everything, but she spoke quickly, seeming to read my looks, and talked of the great uncertainty in which all of us stood, the approach of war, the upsetting of present conditions, and the doubtful future, her manner suggesting that this was a time in which no one could form any settled plans. It seemed to me that she knew what I would say and was warning me against it, and for a moment I felt a little chagrin, but one look at her face was sufficient to drive it away and tell me that she was right. I could not be a man and do otherwise than she wished.

She ceased, and I also was silent. A slight flush had come into her face, telling of embarrassment, and I too knew not what more to say. Then we walked slowly back to the city, and as we passed down Pennsylvania Avenue, Mercer, riding by, bowed to us.

"A satirical nature," I said.

"An honourable and good man," said Marian.

She was looking at Mercer with an expression that was sad, and yet not without some tenderness, and I began to understand.

CHAPTER VI.

THE LONE CABIN.

OUR business with the chiefs continued to go badly, their tempers growing more intractable, and their complaints against the encroachments of the Western settlers upon their lands increasing, and my suspicion became a conviction that our efforts were matched or overmatched by an opposing influence. Some of the chiefs had been assigned to quarters in Georgetown, and on the third day after my walk with Marian I was ordered to take them a message the next evening concerning some presents that we intended to make to them.

I ate a hasty supper, put on my best clothes, mounted my horse, and rode upon my journey.

Georgetown was a more comfortable place in most respects than Washington, and many of the members of Congress lived there during the sessions, going between their rooms and the Capitol in hackney coaches which ran regularly for hire, or on their own horses as I was doing. I passed one coach all spattered over with mud, for the rains had been very heavy recently, and my horse at almost every step sank over his hoofs in the brown and sticky mire. But I did not care, as I had been used to soft, deep roads all my life. I jogged on rather slowly, for with the mud below and my weight above my horse was not able to travel at any great pace.

When I had gone about half the distance to Georgetown I heard the heavy sough of a horse's feet in the mud behind me, and looking back saw a hatchet-faced

man on an enormous gray horse approaching. His pace was considerably faster than mine, and he soon overhauled me, but checked his speed when he came alongside, as if he would ride with me. I was not at all averse, although he was not generally known as a companionable man; in fact, the precise reverse, and when he spoke to me in a friendly manner, calling me by name, I replied in like fashion, addressing him by his.

He would have been thought an odd-looking man anywhere. When he stood upon the ground he must have been more than six feet high, and he was so few inches through that one wondered if he would not break in two some day in the face of a strong wind. His clothing was coarse homespun, drab in colour. A tight high stock enclosed his long, thin throat, and above it rose his long, sharp, narrow face, in which keen little eyes sparkled and flashed above high cheek bones. His whole expression was sarcastic, sneering—the face of a man who believed in few things. Such was John Randolph, of Roanoke, who was very famous in his day and is yet; a man who said more bitter things and made more enemies than any other whom I know, and yet had many good qualities and high principles.

“Whom are you visiting in Georgetown, Mr. Ten Broeck?” he asked.

It is the custom with us for one traveller to ask another where he is going and is not thought inquisitive, and I told him without reluctance.

“The Government will not be successful with these chiefs,” he said. “There will be war in the West and the East too, since all the West and South are in favour of hostilities with Great Britain, and they will carry their point. You are a Westerner yourself and you know this is so.”

“I can speak for my own State. I know that all the Kentuckians favour war.”

“The biggest fools of us all,” he said bluntly. “You

Westerners and Southerners are talking war and doing your best to bring it on, in which you will succeed, but nobody is preparing for it. To make war we must be able to fight. I have no love for the British, who in a foreign country become robbers. I can remember fleeing in the Revolution with my mother and her newborn child before Tarleton and Phillips and their Pandours. But why should we hate the British more than the coward Napoleon, who is doing his best to stir us to war in order to cripple the British to his benefit?"

He spoke with great heat. I could not understand why he applied the word "coward" to Napoleon, who might have many faults, though not that of cowardice, but it was his favourite term for the emperor, and he used it often in his speeches.

I could not argue with him, his tongue was too sharp for me, as it was for many much greater men, and we rode on in silence until we could find some other topic on which we might talk without heat. We came to the hills by and by.

"Yonder is Georgetown," said he.

At the crest of the hills we turned, as if by accord, and looked back at Washington.

The sun was now nearly gone, but a trail of red fire in the west marked its setting. In the east the shadows had come, but the sun, before going, threw a veil of tangled flame and gold over the new city. The white walls of the Capitol were radiant with a pink glow, and the crests catching the last and most brilliant rays of the sun shone afar like beacons.

My companion's face showed admiration, but the expression was there only a moment; then he made a gesture of discontent.

"We talk of making war upon one of the world's most powerful nations," he said, "and look at our capital! But a raw village in a wilderness, and its Govern-

ment lives in a camp. We might at least finish that before we rush to disaster."

We parted as we entered Georgetown, and I was not at all sorry, for his bitter humour depressed me. I trust that the day will never come when I can see only evil in things.

I found the chiefs at the house in which we had quartered them, but their humour was not such as a gentleman finds agreeable, and so leaving them to waste it upon each other I made a call upon some acquaintances, and then mounting my horse started upon the return ride.

It must have been about twelve o'clock when I left Georgetown, and the cold February day had turned into a most unpleasant night. A drizzle of rain was falling and the wind was raw and chilly. The dry boughs of the trees scraped together as they were blown upon each other. In the hills the wind was moaning.

The moon was a pale glimmer behind gray clouds, and I fastened my heavy cloak securely around me to protect myself alike from the cold and the sleety rain.

I turned my horse into the road, and his feet sank with a sough into the mud. With the darkness and such heavy travelling, I was in for an extremely long three miles before I reached Washington. The chilly manner in which my message had been received by the chiefs, and the sinister omens to be drawn from their conduct depressed me, and the night and rain had more influence upon my feelings than it usually does upon one who is accustomed to travel in darkness and wet weather.

The cold rain slipped down under the collar of my coat, and while I was silently abusing the chiefs for their obstinacy my horse wandered from the road in search of firmer footing. As I was desirous of finding a more direct route to Washington, and thus shortening the journey, I concluded to let him go.

The lights of Georgetown twinkled and then went

out behind a smudge of darkness. The wind sobbed among the hills, and the wetness of the night crept into my body. The horse snorted frequently, as if he liked the rain and darkness as little as I.

I heard the plash of water over stones, and then saw a faint grayness cutting my line of march. I had come to Rock Creek, and selecting a place with gently sloping banks I urged my horse into the stream. The water was shallow, but flowing rather swiftly at that point, and the horse stumbled two or three times on the pebbles and small boulders. As we reached the farther shore he fell to his knees with me, but was up again in a moment. But he stood shivering with pain, and when I dismounted and examined him as well as I could in the darkness I found his knees to be so badly cut and bruised that it would be torture to the poor animal to carry me home. Besides, I had brought him all the way from Kentucky with me, and I prized him. There was nothing for it but to walk home through the mud, leading my horse. The accident made no improvement in my humour. All my bad luck seemed to be coming at once.

I drew the cloak a little higher around my neck, trying to check the sly rain which insisted upon slipping down next to the skin and chilling me to the bone. Then I took the bridle in one hand, and leading my horse, which limped at every step, went on. The rain had soaked into the turf, and when my heavy boot sank in it little streams of water spurted up.

We were out of the path, and I was compelled to be my own guide. A good horse will carry you safely on the longest journey in the darkest night if you will let him have his head, but now mine was lame and depending on me, and, moreover, we were out of the road. I began to fear that I had wandered farther to one side than I intended, and that if I were not lost already I would soon be.

I looked around the entire circle of the darkness, but

could see no point of light which might tell of a settler's cabin. A light means cheerfulness, and I had no other reason just then for wishing to see it. The continued sobbing of the wind through the hills, as if the world were in pain, was a weight upon my spirits, though I knew very well the nature of the sound.

We trudged on, the lame horse following dejectedly behind me, his head drooping. I stumbled and saw that I had come to some trees blown down by the wind. Edging my way around them, I found that I was going down a hillside, and heard the trickle of a brook at the bottom of the slope. A beam of light shot down from somewhere and showed me a disk of clear water and the round pebbles over which it trickled; then it passed on and tipped the wet bushes in the line of its passage with flame and silver.

I could see the point from which the light came, behind the brook, and apparently from a cleft between two hills, but I could not see what was there, though I guessed that it was a settler's cabin—some humble squatter's home. But that theory was weakened by the absolute lack of noise. Every squatter has one or more dogs, and they always bark with all their strength whenever a stranger approaches. Now not a note was raised. But the light shone with a fixed, steady radiance, piercing the darkness like a lance.

It was none of my business from what the light proceeded or who made it, but I resolved to explore. The necessity of finding my way back to the road was an incentive. Among these hills I might break my neck, which would be more than a horse's cut knees, and if I found the origin of the light I might also find directions to the road.

The descent to the brook and the ascent of the hill beyond would be too steep for the horse, and I led him back to the summit of the slope, tethering him securely to the bough of a tree which swung low. He was in a

state of depression even surpassing that of his master. The blood was trickling from his wounded knees, and his big body trembled like a child afraid. He rubbed his wet head caressingly against me when I turned, as if entreating me to stay and keep him company. He was too much discouraged to neigh or to stamp.

"I'll be back in five minutes, old horse," I said gently as I stroked his nose.

Then I walked down the bank, picking my footing carefully on the wet grass. When I reached the bottom I found a shallow stream, spread out two or three yards wide over boulders and pebbles. From the bottom of the gorge the bar of light was still visible, shooting over my head and making a luminous circle on the slope which I had left, every twig and stone showing in that limited area of brightness, while all below was in complete darkness, even the surface of the water appearing but faintly where the lance of light crossed above it.

The water bubbled softly over the stones, and farther away I could hear a dull splash as if the stream were going over a fall. The sob of the wind rose now and then to a shriek.

I could cross the stream only by wading, and I stepped lightly into it, not wishing to make any noise. Though but two or three miles from the capital of a great nation, I felt as if I were about to storm the fortress of an enemy. So it happens to one sometimes when in the dark, and alone. As I picked my way up the far slope this feeling that caution was needed grew upon me. I kept my eyes fixed upon the line of light, which streamed over the bushes like the trail of a baby comet, and guided me with certainty toward what I sought.

I was confirmed in my guess that the light came from the depression between two hills, but as I advanced, parallel with the bar of flame, keeping out of its rays, however, that I might not be seen, I was impressed more than ever by the absolute silence save for the wind and

the rustling of the trees and bushes, the trickle of the water being too far away to be heard. The old tales of the Indian wars that I had heard at my mother's hearthstone filled my ears, and I seemed to be a Shawnee warrior stalking a settler's cabin. Then I laughed at myself in ridicule for conjuring up such things, and expected that the next moment some lazy dog would rush out and howl at me with excessive vigour, to atone for his previous lack of vigilance.

But no dog came out or barked, and at the end of the bar of light a small building slowly constructed itself. A patch of wall came out of the blackness, and was followed by another patch, and then another and others which joined themselves together until the side of a log cabin was formed. Then the roof, gently sloping and of rough, long boards, followed the wall out of the darkness, and a complete cabin, such as the poorest of negroes might inhabit, stood before me. From a window, or rather a cleft in the wall, shone the light which had been my guide.

I could see dimly the doorway, so small that it would have compelled me to stoop to enter. In ordinary times I would have gone there and knocked, and that was what custom and common politeness demanded of me, but I still had the feeling that I was not in an ordinary situation, that caution should be my comrade. So I went to the window and peeped, not through it, but through a chink between the walls by its side. I had approached with so much gentleness that I was sure no one inside could hear, but to put my eye to the chink I was forced to stoop down from my tall height.

I saw a scanty interior—some stools, an old table, and walls as rough on the inside as on the outside. On the table was a lantern, from which had come the beckoning light. Three men sat on the stools, and the one who was beside the table was my kinsman, Major Gilbert Northcote. His face was turned toward me, and even

otherwise I would have recognised him by his figure. His companions were two men whom I had never seen before. One was tall and slender, and the other short and stout. Both were dressed like ordinary farmers, but their faces were thin and keen.

I gave silent thanks for my loss of the way and the lameness of my horse, as I believed that I had happened upon a meeting that would be of interest and importance to us. Gilbert Northcote, who was in Washington only to plan mischief, could not be meeting strangers at such a time and place for any innocent purpose.

The Tory rested one elbow on the table; spread out before him were sheets of paper, and he held a pencil in his hand; the look of careless, even supercilious indifference that was habitual with him in Washington had changed to one of keen and concentrated interest.

"What do you say of them in that part of the country, Walters?" he asked.

"Disaffected; not disposed to risk anything," replied the tall man.

Major Northcote's face showed satisfaction, and he immediately made notes on the paper.

"It confirms all the previous reports from that quarter," he said when his pencil stopped. "In calculating the probable resistance I think we might leave them out."

His satisfaction was so great that he tapped on the table repeatedly in a contented manner, and puckered up his lips as if he would whistle, which, too, is usually a sign of gladness.

"Now what do you say, Hardison?" he asked the short man. "How are they in the South?"

"Very angry, but not likely to furnish much when the time comes," said Hardison. "They are too far away, and their direct interests are too little affected. Besides, their new Indian war is going to give them plenty to do."

“Good again,” said Major Northcote, setting to work a second time with his pencil. “These notes and my maps will make a fine budget for the people in London. Do you see any mistake in this map?”

He spread out one of the broadest sheets of paper on the table, and the two men stood up and examined it with him. They seemed to have no fault to find, and the Tory rolled it up again, but left it on the table.

“I think I know Washington and its surroundings pretty thoroughly,” he said in his self-satisfied tone, “and I’ve put my knowledge into that map. It seems almost superfluous, though, to mark the defences, for they amount to nothing.”

“They would amount to mighty little anyway before a British army,” said Walters, the tall man, with a laugh.

“I should think so,” said Major Northcote.

“Having done our work, we can take a little refreshment now, lads,” said Major Northcote, who seemed to be in fine humour.

The man whom he called Hardison produced some sliced meat and bread from a knapsack hanging on the wall, though I had not noticed it before, and Major Northcote took out of his coat pocket a large flask wound with silver wire. He shook it and it gave forth a pleasant gurgle. He smiled and the two men smiled. He drew the stopper, which snapped comfortably as it came out, and then all three drank, one after another, from the flask. The pleasant odour of the liquor permeated the cabin and stole through the chink to me, filling me with unsatisfied longing. Then they ate.

I was not sure what to do. The notes and maps lay upon the table, while the men ate and drank, and I knew they would be of value to us, besides being a decisive proof that Major Northcote was a dangerous man, and engaged in practices to which our Government would have a right to object in the most emphatic manner—that is, by sending him away. The scene between us at

the Capitol, when he seemed to think that I might help him in his schemes, still rankled a little in my mind and impelled me in the way to which duty so clearly pointed. It would be to the good of the public, as well as some individuals, that he remain no longer in Washington.

While I thought, the question was partly solved for me. The two men finished their eating and drinking, and rising bade Major Northcote good night. He commended them for zeal, encouraged them to other good work, and said he would soon send for them again. They went out and left him sitting by the table, engrossed in thought.

The men could not see me on the other side of the cabin, and they walked away without hesitation toward Washington. Noticing that Major Northcote seemed to be in no hurry to move, I waited until the men were so far away that they could hear no noise from the cabin, and then pushing the door open I entered.

A single stride was sufficient to take me to the table. I seized the roll of papers in one hand and the silver bound flask in the other. The roll of papers I thrust into my trousers' pocket, and the silver bound flask I raised to my lips.

"Cousin," I said, "I thank you for both."

Then the pleasant liquor trickled down my throat. I repeat that I was wet and cold, and the taste of it was fine and the effect finer.

It was some pleasure to me to see Major Northcote's control of himself, even in that moment of surprise and wrath. He started, in truth, at my sudden entrance and his eyeballs distended for a moment, but then he was himself again and waited.

"Excuse me, Major Northcote," I said, handing him the flask. "It was very good, but I did not take all; I left some for you."

It is obvious that I was pleased with myself, but I could not surpass him in coolness. He took the flask

and saying, "Here's to the health of forward young men, Mr. Ten Broeck," drank composedly.

I inferred from his tone a recognition of the fact that we were to face each other as enemies.

"I've come in suddenly and without an invitation," I said, "but I hope I'm none the less welcome."

I think I was catching some of his own sarcastic temper.

Major Northcote rested his arm comfortably on the table and looked fixedly at me. I could see the faint smile lightly touched with irony which had marked him when we listened to the senatorial debate, playing around the corner of his eyes and mouth. Outside the rain had increased in violence and was playing a steady tune on the thin roof. I bore his look without flinching, for I felt that I was more in the right than he.

"You think that you have done a clever thing," he said presently.

"I can not claim that my arrival was clever, but I believe it to have been timely. You are attached to the British embassy here, and you are using the opportunities that position gives you to send spies over the country and obtain all sorts of information that will be useful to our enemy in case of war. You have passed all the bounds of international courtesy, and I have absolute proof of it in these maps and notes of yours that I have seized."

"And you observe that I do not even ask you to give them back to me."

"Because you know I would not do it."

"Not altogether. I would prefer not to lose them just at this time, but since you have them I will not make a fuss about the matter. What do you intend to do with them?"

I said that I would give them to Mr. Gallatin, with Major Northcote's dismissal from Washington as the certain result.

"Yes, that will follow," he said, "and I would have stayed a little longer, but perhaps it is not worth while. My work here is done, and I am tired of this muddy little village in the woods, with its ignorant farmers and its talking lawyers and its lack of everything to make life pleasant to a man who can take an interest in the greater world of affairs and men."

I had no reply to make to such talk as that, but carefully placed his papers in my waistcoat pocket.

"I will come back again," he continued, "though in another rôle. I have warned you, but you are only a boy, and perhaps you do not understand. Yet this country is rapidly preparing its own overthrow. I have been even willing to help you. I have liked you in a way, and I thought I saw promise in you. I would have arranged a brilliant career for you, but you would not let me and you preferred to go with the losers."

I thanked him, but now I was neither dazzled nor deceived, nor was I turned from my determination to place his papers in the hands of Mr. Gallatin, which, of course, would mean the President's very soon thereafter.

I rose to go, and I presumed we parted without any personal hostility.

"Certainly," he said, "you are a boy and my kinsman, and while you are rash and headstrong sometimes, the fault is not criminal."

I thanked him, though I did not believe he would forgive my sudden arrival and seizure of his papers, and went out, leaving him drumming his fingers upon the table.

I stepped from the cabin, and a gust of rain, very cold to the skin, dashed into my face. I plunged down the hillside, intending to reach my horse at once and push on for Washington as fast as I could. Halfway down, I looked back. The cabin already was losing itself, only a patch of the wall showed through the darkness. But the light still shone from the window with

the same clear, steady radiance that had drawn me there. I stopped for a moment, but I could hear no movement on the part of Major Northcote.

I could imagine that his easy humour was only assumed, and that he was not so ready to go from Washington as he had boasted. Still I had no right to feel sorry for him, however well disposed toward me he may have been at one time.

I reached the stream again, and, wading across it, climbed up the hillside to my horse. He received me with a faint neigh, and actually quivered with joy when I put my hand upon his head and stroked it. I think he was both lonely and afraid. I took him by the bridle, and we resumed our interrupted procession through the forest, I going first and the horse following. I looked over my shoulder at the beam of light which shot from the cabin window, but it faded rapidly as we moved away, and in a few moments was gone.

I had a good general idea of the direction of Washington, and bearing back toward the road I soon struck it again. Though it was still dark and the rain was lashing me in the face, I knew the road by the depth of the mud, and reversing our positions I sent the horse ahead and followed close behind, trusting to his instinct to lead us right. He plodded bravely on, as if he were encouraged by my return to his company, and presently I could see the dim shadow of large buildings which brought to me the knowledge that I was entering the capital again.

No one was about, not even a watchman, and I could not see a light in any window. Washington was taking its night's rest very seriously, which was fitting in the capital of a sober people, but it reminded me what a small and crude place it was, where not even a light met a man entering.

I took my horse to the stable, lighted a lantern, which was always kept there, bandaged his bruised knees, and fed him. Then I went to my own room in the Six

Buildings, still unobserved, for everybody was sleeping. I looked at myself in the little glass, and beheld an animated statue of mud, for it had splashed all over me, even to my face, and was drying there.

I washed the mud off my face, put my clothes on a chair and Major Northcote's papers under my pillow, and went to sleep.

CHAPTER VII.

I RECEIVE A COMMISSION.

THE coloured boy awoke me at the usual time the next morning, and though still tired and sleepy I went to breakfast. That was the period when we ate heavy and hearty breakfasts and had no complaint to make. I had a big cup of coffee, hot bread, toast soaked in butter, fat cheese, and slices of ham and hung beef, the customary Washington breakfast of the time, and as I ate them, one after another, my condition as a man improved steadily.

Then I hastened to the Treasury, and when Mr. Gallatin arrived said to him at once that I had something of importance to tell him.

"I hope it's not political, Philip," he said humorously.

"But it is, Mr. Gallatin," I replied.

He looked sorrowful, as if something else would be a relief, but told me to go on. Then I produced the maps and notes and explained how I had obtained them. I said that I was very reluctant to inform against my own kinsman, but I believed I ought to do it.

"You have decided wisely and honourably," he said. "Major Northcote is an able and dangerous man. Of course we will have to send him away now, whatever the British Government may say about it, and we would have done so sooner had so good an excuse been given to us. As you saw the other night, we are on tenter-hooks and have to be extremely careful. But we are hoping

for better relations before long with England, and that she will make some sort of atonement for her outrages. At least, we are to receive a minister from that country soon, as you know they have had nobody here since we sent away that intolerable Jackson.

He said nothing more to me about the matter, but I heard the next day that Major Gilbert Northcote of the British legation had been notified by the Government that he would no longer be recognised in any official capacity, and the Government trusted that he would see the propriety of leaving Washington at once. Major Northcote saw the propriety, so he was reported to have said, and prepared for instant departure. I did not expect to see him again, but he called on me that evening at my room and bade me a polite adieu. I replied in like manner, and he left. Mercer told me the next day that I was well rid of an evil friend, but while I felt some satisfaction over his departure I was sorry that some other than myself had not been the cause of it. This, too, I found to be Marian's view of the case when next I saw her, though she had no blame for me.

I was somewhat surprised two days later, as I was about to leave our office, when our chief, for so I called Mr. Gallatin, asked me to visit him at his room that night. "It is important," he said, and impressed by his manner I hastened my supper and was in front of the house in which he boarded at least half an hour before the appointed time. I walked up and down the street to pass that period of waiting, and when it had expired knocked at his door.

The Secretary was writing at a little desk, and his only light was a tallow candle. He seemed to live night and day among his parchments and other papers. He received me quite hospitably and cheerfully, and came at once to the point he had in mind, though I liked his introductory words but little.

"Philip," he said, "you have been a good clerk for

me, but I am going to give you other work to do now."

I was surprised, but I said nothing.

"You are curious," he said, "but I will not keep your curiosity waiting. We are going to send you on a journey, a long one."

"When do you wish me to go?" I asked.

"To-morrow," he said. "You will perhaps be surprised when I explain to you what your new duties are to be. Sit down there, because it will take me some time to tell you."

I took the chair that he had indicated and waited in much wonder.

"I am about to give you a very important task for one so young and without great experience," he said, speaking in a tone of the utmost seriousness, "but it is partly because you are young and inexperienced that you have been selected, as much by the President as myself."

My wonder increased, but still I said nothing.

"You know, Philip, the extremely precarious situation of this Government and people. We are in danger of being crushed to death by the rival powers of England and France, which have arrayed one half of Europe against the other half, and we are plundered and robbed by both. It begins to be evident that we must fight, despite all the sacrifices that we have made and humiliations that we have endured to avoid it, and it is England whom we will have to choose as our foe. But, unfortunately, we are not united among ourselves. We are sixteen or eighteen petty republics, each with its own interests, and several combining to form sectional groups. The national or common Government is weak, and no one knows whether it can hold together under the shock of war. The West is, and long has been, eager for the contest. New England, which has suffered most from the rapacity and arrogance of Great Britain, is nevertheless against the war, because she thinks, and probably thinks

correctly, that her great commerce will be ruined by the English fleet, which will outnumber our own at least forty or fifty to one, and is but little needed in Europe, owing to the destruction of the Continental navies at the Nile, Cöpenhagen, and Trafalgar. We do not even know that New England would help us should we declare war, nor do we know what position the great and wealthy State of New York will take. Pennsylvania, we are sure, will go with the West and South, but that alone is not sufficient. We invite a quick and crushing defeat by going into the war without New England and New York. Even with them our chance is desperate, without a navy, without a regular army, without military supplies, without money, with a Government that has not yet been tested, with a sparse population scattered over vast areas, without any of the resources of war except the raw material of human flesh and bones which will have to be drawn from immense distances and beaten into something like military shape by defeats. The best that we can hope for is defeat first and victory afterward, instead of defeat first and defeat afterward and always."

He made this long speech with slowness and deliberation.

"I hope that you have listened to every word, and that you fully understand," he said.

"I think I do."

"Well, you see that it is of the greatest importance to the Government to learn the exact state of feeling in New York and New England, not merely of a few leading men, but among the great mass of the public. Prominent and wealthy men, as a rule, know only the feelings of those in like position. But we want to know what the masses and young men think, and especially what the young men would most likely do, for it is they who always fight the wars. Now, we have chosen you as one of those who are to go and find out for us. Don't hunt up the politicians. If you hear of any man who is called promi-

nent, whose name appears frequently in the newspapers, avoid him. These are the men who may bring on wars, but they rarely fight them. Go among the young men of your own age; be a good fellow with them. Go into good society; you have a good appearance, decent manners, and you are of a good family. We will give you letters. Talk to the women as much as you can, especially to handsome or witty ones. They have far more influence than you think in bringing about declarations of war or peace."

He spoke with much earnestness, and I was impressed. Moreover, my enthusiasm began to rise. Here was a mission which would be both important and agreeable, a coincidence which seldom happens.

"Go around, too, among the poorer people," he continued, "day labourers and others—stray out among the farmers and talk with them all. Let them think you are a mere traveller for pleasure, then they will talk freely to you, where they would be reserved with a public man. They will disguise nothing from you."

"When do you wish me to start?" I asked.

"In two days," he said. "Come here to-morrow evening, and I will give you letters and some money. I will announce that you have resigned and gone North and East to see our great cities and complete your knowledge of the world."

"Can not I tell my father the exact facts?" I asked. I was afraid when he heard of my departure that he would think I had been in some trouble.

"Yes, you may do that," said the Secretary, "but caution him to keep your information to himself. We can trust him, I know. I think you had better take passage by the stagecoach line, as you will attract less attention in that manner than if you were to go horseback. You can spend two or three days in Philadelphia, a little longer in New York, and then go on to Boston. Boston is the point from which we are most anxious to obtain accurate information, and on your return journey we

want you to make a long stop in New York. Now, good night, and think well over your plans."

I did not forget to thank him for what I deemed a great honour, and I left the room full of joyful anticipations. It was a relief to me to escape from office work, and then such a mission to the great towns, in such a capacity, contained the promise of many and varied experiences. It was finer fortune than I had any right to expect, and I wanted to raise my voice and give a shout for my good luck. But the saving sense of gravity intervened, and my thoughts turned from my own good luck to our difficulties.

I went to my room, and there wrote a long letter to my father, describing all my interview with Mr. Gallatin, down to the last word. I finished the letter, sealed it, and addressed it. I knew it would please my father. It would bring back his own youth, and he would be proud of me. I could think that without egotism.

The writing done, I began to pack, which was not a long or tedious task. I put all my clothing in a small leather trunk which had been taken by my father from New York to Kentucky, and given by him to me. I also put in a large pistol and some ammunition. One can never tell what is going to happen in strange places and in troubled times. All these things finished, it was near midnight, and I had time to reflect that as I was not to start until the day after to-morrow it was not worth while to lose sleep.

I went to the office the next morning and worked as usual, but when I went out after my dinner I found that Mr. Gallatin had already announced my resignation and my forthcoming Eastern tour for the purpose of broadening my mind with a knowledge of the great world.

"Is it really true, Phil," asked Mercer, who sat in his usual seat beside me, "that you have resigned and are going East to improve your mind?"

"It's a fact, Tom," I replied.

"Perhaps you are not going wholly at your own expense," he said, looking me squarely in the eye. "You have always been a lucky man, Phil; lucky in many things."

A little sadness appeared in his tone as he spoke the last words, and I was silent.

Both Bidwell and Cyrus Pendleton congratulated me on my coming journey, and enlarged on the pleasures I would find in the Eastern cities, but neither was able to hide from me the sense of relief that he felt at my departure, though I gave no hint in reply that I understood.

I saw Marian the evening before I left, and I let her divine that my going from Washington at this time was not altogether of my own choice. Perhaps she needed no suggestion from me to tell her this.

"I hope," I said, "that when I return I will find everything here unchanged."

"Everything will be unchanged," she said, meeting my gaze firmly.

Then she gave me the pressure of her hand, and I said good-bye, going away secure in the belief that one woman's hopes would accompany me on my travels, something that every man should wish to have.

CHAPTER VIII.

A JOURNEY IN THE WORLD.

I BEGAN the next morning my great journey in the world. It was scarcely daylight, the stagecoach taking an early start in order to reach Baltimore the same day, but early as it was Mercer, Courtenay, Charlton, and two or three other good friends of mine came to see me off. They wished me good luck, said enviously that they would like to be going with me, shook hands, and then I climbed upon the front seat. The driver, who sat beside me, blew his horn, cracked his whip, and with a lurch and a mighty rattle we were off.

At that day a journey to New York and Boston was not often taken by a Kentuckian, and I was overflowing with enthusiasm and anticipations, while my parting with Marian had left enough of tender recollection to make me look forward, too, to my return.

The sun was just rising over the eastern hills, flushing the horizon a rosy red, which faded into pink toward the zenith. The surface of the river gleamed with spots of rose or silver, and golden rays shot from the walls of the Capitol. The day was crisp and cold, but I was well wrapped in my greatcoat, and the air was so fresh to the lungs that I could have leaped and shouted with the mere joy of living.

The big coach rattled over the stones of the new turnpike, and we were soon beyond Washington and into the forest. After leaving the city, habitation seemed almost to cease; once or twice we saw distant smoke

rising over the treetops, and we thought it must mark a farm house, but on either side of us was the dense and untouched forest. Sometimes the trees were so thick and their branches projected so far over the road that in summer, when in full foliage, they must have formed a perfect canopy for travellers. Under the trees I could see the tender young grass appearing, and the increasing buds marked the advance of the southern spring, perhaps already in full bloom far down on the Gulf and now creeping steadily northward.

I turned my head to take a last look at Washington, but it was already shut out by the forest which circled around it, as an island is surrounded by the sea.

The night was at hand when we drove into Baltimore. I had been there before on brief trips from Washington, but it was always a delight to me, coming from our lazy capital of not more than five thousand inhabitants into this great busy city of forty thousand. The lamps were burning in the streets as we drove through them, throwing patches of light upon the brick houses. The tall spires of the churches cut the dusky sky.

In the streets were sailors from the packets which were carrying the name of Baltimore throughout the world, and although it was full nine o'clock, not only the sailors but many others were about, making the place as lively as some towns in the daytime.

I was to stay in Baltimore a day, to cash Mr. Galatin's drafts on the branch bank of the United States, and also some private drafts of my own on the Bank of Maryland, and went out early the next morning to attend to the finances of Philip Ten Broeck, Esq. Finding that the bank doors were not yet opened, I strolled about the city, admiring its fine buildings and the industry of its inhabitants.

Both the houses and the people interested me, and I found plenty of strangers who were polite enough to point out to me the places of interest. I saw the prin-

cipal markets—Hanover, Marsh, and Fell's Point—and what I admired about them most were the great heaps of fish of a hundred varieties, the oysters and the crabs and the lobsters and the wild ducks from the Chesapeake.

A little later I cashed my drafts and then strayed back to the Marsh Market, where I was watching a great pile of fish, whose scales glistened in the sun, mingled white and silver, when some one put his hand lightly upon my arm and said:

"And you, too, are on your travels, kinsman?"

I looked around, and there was Major Northcote, calm, dignified, and, as usual, dressed with European care.

"Yes, I travel, but from choice," I could not refrain from saying.

"I am fairly hit," he said, showing no anger, "but I am in the enemy's country; I must expect it."

He began to tell me about the great European cities, and, unwholesome as I believed such company to be for me, I listened a while as we walked on together. It seemed strange that I should find his society agreeable after our misadventures, and reflecting upon it I decided that I ought to leave him. I bade him good day as politely as I could, and he replied in like manner, saying we might become fellow-travellers, and if chance so willed it he would be pleased.

I returned to my tavern, and the next morning started for Philadelphia, having no intention to linger in Baltimore, whose state of mind could not be mistaken by our Government, owing to its nearness to Washington. When I climbed upon the stagecoach my kinsman, Major Northcote, bade me a cheery good morning from his seat just behind me, and, as was fit, I replied in like manner.

The other passengers were looking at the Tory in a rather curious and by no means friendly manner, their hostility being invited by the British cut of his clothes

and beard, matters about which he was always very particular. But he received their glances with supreme indifference, and I felt sure that he preferred their disapproval. I thought it best to avoid further conversation with him at present, and not indicate to the other passengers that we were kinsmen and old acquaintances. This policy seemed to be his own also, and I settled myself for the journey.

We drove along very merrily at the good rate of three miles an hour, and were blessed with another beautiful day, the signs of spring increasing. I could almost see the buds opening. The green hues of field and forest deepened as the wind from the south blew upon them. The brooks shimmered among the trees, and the little ponds in the fields were made of molten silver.

We were in the fields now, and the green tint of coming spring rose above the brown of departing winter. The road cut through the meadows like a long white sword blade and entered the woods. The flush of spring, not the spring that was here, but the spring that was coming, touched everything. The sun had not been up long, and its rays still burned in red and gold on the eastern hills. Beads of dew twinkled on the grass. Fields and foliage were fresh from their night bath. In a pasture beside the road two colts leaped and romped with physical joy. But I was not alone in feeling the influence of a beautiful sunny morning. Its effect was visible on all, even Major Northcote. Some of the men whistled, one woman hummed a song in a very low voice, and the Tory looked about with the air of a man who could enjoy a crisp day and peaceful rural scenery.

"It's a fine day, Philip," he said presently to me.

"Yes, Major Northcote," I said, "as fine as you could find even in your perfect England."

I said it with a little malice, for his slurs upon us still rankled.

"We will not argue that point," he said lightly.

The others looked at him with more interest and attention, and with increasing hostility. Englishmen were not popular with us, and such Major Northcote considered and styled himself, though a born American.

"He called you Major Northcote, and spoke of you as an Englishman; are you a major in the British army?" asked one Luttrell, a Pennsylvania stock trader, a rough-looking man, but of open and honest face.

"In the Canadian militia, my friend, which is the same thing," returned Major Northcote politely.

"Then this is not the country for you," said Luttrell. "We don't love Englishmen, and still less the renegades in Canada who call themselves Englishmen."

"The men in Canada whom you call renegades," said Major Northcote smoothly, "are not renegades. They are exiles; exiles because they were true to what they think was right."

It may have been an unwise speech to make, time and place considered, but Major Northcote was a man of unsurpassed courage. At that moment the driver pulled up at a blacksmith's shop beside the road, and announced that he would have the horses' shoes examined there, suggesting that we improve the opportunity by getting out and stretching our legs. We were all glad to do so. Major Northcote climbed down from his seat with the rest of us, and strolled back and forth by the roadside.

The blacksmith examined carefully the feet of every horse. He was far in years, and his was a little shanty almost hid by the encroaching woods. He seemed to me to be too old and feeble for such work.

"Why don't you have somebody to help you?" I asked, as he put down one horse's foot and prepared to pick up another.

"I haven't the money to pay for it," he said.

"Haven't you any sons to help you?"

"No; I have one son, but he is not a blacksmith."

"What is he?"

"A sailor."

"Perhaps that's a better trade than blacksmithing."

"I guess not," he said, shaking his head sadly, "at least not the way he's practising it."

"Why?"

"He's on a British man-of-war somewhere off the north coast of Europe, blockading the French; impressed out of the schooner Sally Jones in the Chesapeake years ago and forced to fight for the English. I guess he'll never come back again, an' there's plenty more like him. An' our Government hasn't done a thing. I say, damn a government that doesn't protect its own citizens!"

He bent down his old face, and went on stolidly with his horseshoeing. Several of the passengers had heard him. Among them was Luttrell.

"Here, you infernal renegade," he called out to Major Northcote, "do you hear what this man says about his son? It's all you and your dirty English are good for, man stealing."

Major Northcote turned flaming eyes upon the man when he heard the epithet applied to him, and his lips moved as if he would say something, but he checked the reply and continued his measured tread back and forth.

I did not feel called upon to interfere.

"Here you, you Tory!" said Luttrell, who seemed suddenly to have conceived of himself as some sort of retributive justice. "Come here, and answer to this man for his son! The one for the other, I say."

"I know nothing about the man's son," said Major Northcote. "I never heard of him before in my life, but if he's serving in the British navy, I've no doubt it's a good thing for him." He seemed to think that the time had come for plain words, though I believed that he did not estimate rightly the man who was talking to him.

"Do you think so?" said Luttrell; "then I say again the one for the other. Since this man's son has been kidnapped to serve in the British navy, why not put

Major Northcote, of the British army, or the Canadian militia, which is the same thing, at work in the blacksmith shop in his place. Come now, Major Northcote, you have a strong arm, pull the bellows for a while. What do you say to the swap, lads?"

The other men in the party welcomed the suggestion as a happy thought. Perhaps some of them had a relative or a friend who had been kidnapped by a British war ship. It was very likely.

"Try the forge, Major," said one; "you'll like it."

A deep flush spread over Major Northcote's face. The threat of personal indignity reached the quick, but he said nothing, merely continuing his military stride up and down. I did not know what to do, and not knowing waited.

"Since you won't hear, we'll have to make you hear," said Luttrell, striding up to him and laying his hand upon his arm.

The major clinched his fist and struck Luttrell in the face with such force that he fell to the earth. Then he faced the crowd, red with anger, and defiant.

"You dogs!" he said. There was nothing assumed about him now. The real man was showing.

Then a new and alarming cry was raised.

"Remember the Chesapeake!" shouted some one. "Don't forget her men who were murdered by the British! A life for theirs!"

The others took it up, and the forge and the blacksmithing were forgotten. All had the fate of the Chesapeake's men in their minds, and his striking the first blow roused the spirit of revenge. "Hang him!" they shouted; "he's a British spy anyway, and it will be one for our own men who have been killed!"

Luttrell was up again, bleeding in the face, and he seized Major Northcote by the shoulder. Some one ran to the blacksmith's for a rope. The major struck at Luttrell again, but his arm was warded off, and he re-

ceived in return a heavy blow in the face which drew blood. The red drops fell on his mustache, and spattered thence on his white stock. But only that glimpse of his face was permitted to me, for the next moment the crowd was upon him, and a wild struggle followed.

In the beginning of the affair I had not known how to interfere, and the cry to hang Major Northcote had come so suddenly, and had been followed by action so quickly, that time to do anything had been lacking hitherto. Now I rushed forward, and seizing Luttrell, threw him back with such violence that he turned head over heels. I served another in like manner, and pushed a third back with my hand. Then I was able to get at the major, and I jerked him out of their hands.

"Are you gone crazy, men?" I shouted. "Do you know what a crime you are trying to commit?"

"They've killed our people. Why shouldn't we put one of theirs out of the way?" said one of them in a voice that sullen and still threatening.

It is curious how the blood-lust rises, and what a strong hold it sometimes takes of men who are peaceful and amiable in their ordinary lives.

"That's true," I said in reply to him, "but we will have ample revenge for it all some day. A crime by us does not avenge crimes committed by them."

Several crowded up, as if they would carry out their sudden violent impulse anyhow.

"This man is my kinsman," I said, "and even if he is a Tory, I am as good an American as any of you, and you shall not put your hands upon him again."

I was growing angry, and fortunately my size was imposing. By good luck, Luttrell, who had received the blow, came to my assistance.

"He is right, boys," he said; "leave the man alone, and we'll pay 'em back in a better way some day."

That was sufficient, and they dropped their project

as suddenly as they had conceived it, turning away and leaving Major Northcote to do as he pleased.

I was standing beside the major, with my hand upon his arm, for I had determined to protect him to the best of my ability. I felt sincerely sorry for him, as to such a man blows and the loss of his dignity were a grievous insult. His hat had been knocked off, his gray hair was awry, and his face was red, except where it was blue around the bruise that he had received; the blood was still dripping upon his mustache and his collar and shoulders, and his coat was torn.

"There is a brook back of the smithy," I said to him; "come and wash your face, and I will help you straighten out your clothing." I felt a little ashamed, for, perhaps, I had been partly the cause of the misadventure.

"What well-bred gentlemen your countrymen are!" he said with bitter irony.

I protested that he had merely reaped some of the seed which his Government had sown, and that chance and chance only had made him a victim.

"Perhaps you are right," he said, and assumed his wonted air of indifference, though I was sure it was only assumption.

He walked to the little brook, and taking up the water in his hands cleansed his face and smoothed his hair and mustache with his fingers. Then he adjusted his disarranged clothing carefully, and while he was occupied so I strolled back to the smithy, and found that the driver was ready to resume the journey. I told him and Luttrell and one or two others that Major Northcote was an official of the British Government, and any further violence toward him might cause us all a lot of trouble. They promised to molest him no more, and I had full confidence in their promise, as their wrath was exhausted, and, moreover, they had handled him pretty roughly as it was.

We climbed into our seats, and the driver called out,

"All ready!" The major walked up slowly from the brook. His personal appearance was restored, and his bearing was easy. He resumed his place in silence.

About sunset of the second day from Baltimore we reached Philadelphia, and my anticipations were high as we approached that famous town. Just about that year, or perhaps a year or two earlier, New York began to pass Philadelphia and take first place among the cities of our country; but Philadelphia was still the finer and the more interesting, the historic town, the town in which the great Declaration had been made, the ancient capital, the town which had been the chief scene of action for so many great and famous men, some yet living, some gone. I had fixed already in my mind the points of interest which I wished first to see, and it is almost needless to say that they were Independence and Carpenters' Halls. Our driver had recommended me to a good tavern, and when I parted with my company of the journey, some of whom had come all the way with me from Baltimore, I felt as if they had become old acquaintances, just as one learns to look upon his comrades in a long sea voyage. Major Northcote also was preparing to go to his tavern, or to whatever place at which he intended to pass the night, and bade me adieu, trusting that I would continue to enjoy my journey. Then he went his way, which was not mine, and I hoped that I would not meet him again.

CHAPTER IX.

ON A FRENCH DECK.

THOUGH I had letters to people of station and consequence in Philadelphia, I did not intend to use more than one or two of them during my stop there on my brief northward journey, saving the majority for the return trip. The two or three days now awaiting me I wished to spend among the people on the streets, in the taverns, the markets, and the drinking shops, discovering their state of mind with regard to war or peace by observation and by actual talk with them. I found Philadelphia to be a much larger and finer city than Baltimore, exceeding anything that I had expected, and I visited all the famous places. I went to Independence Hall, where the immortal Declaration was made, Carpenters' Hall, where the first Continental Congress met; visited the old Swede Church and the other famous churches, and then strolled down the banks of the Schuylkill and Delaware, among the sailors. These sailors seemed to be mostly a turbulent and not much of a God-fearing set, addicted to strong oaths and stronger liquors. As at Baltimore, there were low grogeries, in which they loved to congregate and spend the money they had earned.

As I went farther down the river I beheld a sloop of war. I could see no flag upon her, but two or three sailors at work upon her deck had the look of Frenchmen. It seemed strange to me that a French war ship

should be anchored at Philadelphia, a river port, with British squadrons all along our coast, but walking farther down I read the name upon her—La Rochelle—and beyond a doubt that was certainly French, though she might prove to be a prize which the English had adapted to their own service without changing her name.

But she was still under the French flag. I found a sailor at last who could tell me her tale.

“That’s La Rochelle, a twenty-two-gun sloop, one of Bonaparte’s ships,” he said. “She was cruising off the Capes in search of prizes among the British merchant vessels when she was sighted by two British frigates, which gave chase. Her path out to sea was blocked, but she escaped up the Delaware, and here she is at Philadelphia blockaded. She’ll go down the river the first dark night, and try to slip out again.”

My sympathies were with the Frenchman. I had seen enough of the French at Washington to know that they cared as little as the English about the right, but I could not forget that they had given us great help in the Revolution.

The dusk was coming on, and behind me the lights in the city began to twinkle. One of the French sailors sat on the rail of the ship, and let his feet dangle over. Though the twilight was deepening, I could see his face, and perhaps it was the soft gray of the dusk, and again perhaps it was my own imagination, but it was the face of a young man who mused or dreamed of some one left behind him. I thought I could see the smile or tender light in his eyes as he looked, without seeing, at the blue and white points of light in the city, or the blue and gray and rippling surface of the river. The flowing water, the tide, or the current murmured softly around the side of the ship, and the young sailor began to sing a ballad in the mellow tongue of the south of France:

* Quand le marin revient de guerre,
Tout doux,
Quand le marin revient de guerre,
Tout doux,
Tout mal chaussé, tout mal vêtu,
Pauvre marin d'où reviens tu ?
Tout doux.

The words were strange to me then, but the tone told of care and pathos. It made me think of the land from which it came, that fair land of France, with its sunny wheat fields and its vineyards black with the heavy clusters of grapes.

He began a second verse of the song, slow, soft, and wailing. There was a strange silence on the river, merely the distant dip of an oar now and then in the water, and some one far away calling. The hum in the city was dying, the darkness was coming down over both town and river, and the water shone through it with a faint and silvery gleam.

There is nothing like a good song, well sung, to draw one's sympathy, and my feelings were with that ship, as if she were my own. I took the deepest personal interest in her, and hoped with a great hope that the night would be dark and that she would slip down the river, and afterward between the Capes and past the British fleet into safety.

The night grew darker, and gathering clouds showed that it would be all that I wished. The singer ceased, and his figure vanished from the deck, but the charm of his singing remained. The outlines of La Rochelle became indistinct and shadowy, the silver gleam of the river faded into a misty gray. Where I stood, no light was visible on the ship.

Accustoming my eyes to the dark, I saw that some one else was watching the French ship. He was of or-

* An old French song of longing.

dinary figure and appearance, but he seemed to be more deeply interested even than I. He shifted about, as if he would secure new points of observation, and never took his eyes from the sloop. This absorption enabled me to observe him without being noticed in return. I saw that his face was decidedly English, fat, and ruddy, with reddish side whiskers, and his walk, his entire manner, was that of an Englishman.

I guessed the man at once. He was an English spy come there to note the sailing of the French sloop, and to tell the ships of his own nation to meet and take her. I knew not what system of communication, what messengers or signals he might have, or whether they would prove effective, but I resolved at once to set my own efforts against his. If La Rochelle were about to sail, he should not send the warning of it to any one.

I stepped farther back from the waterside, so that he might not observe me, and I followed him, though at a distance, in all his twists and turns, as he tried to see whatsoever might pass on board the French ship. A light suddenly blazed up there, and some sailors appeared on her deck. From the way they set to work, I judged that La Rochelle was preparing for her dangerous return. I intended to warn the Frenchmen of the strict watch kept upon them, and it was now time for me to set about it.

I slipped back in the darkness, and travelling a parallel course went down the stream until I thought I had gone far enough to escape the observation of the English spy. Then I returned to the banks of the river, and there found a waterman who was willing, for good hire, to row me to the French sloop.

"Do you know the captain's name?" I asked as he pulled us along.

"Dubosc," he replied; "a good man to handle his ship."

We were already halfway to La Rochelle. Follow-

ing my instructions, the boatman had rowed first to the far side of the river, and we were now approaching from such a course that the ship was between us and the spy, thus hiding us from him. In addition, we had the darkness, which was now very heavy on land and river, to help us. Behind our boat the water, as it closed back after our passage, made but a dim gray wake. The farther shore was lost in the obscurity, and due ahead of us the bulk of La Rochelle showed, dim and misshapen. But there came from her a creaking noise—the shuffle and the rasping slide of sail against sail.

“She’s going down the river, and mighty soon, too; there’s no doubt of it,” said the boatman.

A minute later and we were at the side of La Rochelle. My boatman hailed, and a head—black crinkly hair surmounting a thin dark face—was thrust over the rail.

“Who’s there?” called the man in good English, though with a decided French accent.

“Is that you, Captain Dubosc?” I replied, as if I had known him for years.

“Yes, I am Captain Dubosc; who are you, and what do you want?”

“I am a friend,” I said; “I will tell you more when you take me on board; but my message is of the utmost importance to you and to France.”

I could see his keen black eyes shining like a cat’s through the darkness, and he gave the word that I be taken on board. I paid my waterman, and dismissed him, trusting to the Frenchmen to put me ashore when I had done them my service. I saw him rowing away until he and his little boat were enveloped by the shadows, while I stood on the deck with the Frenchmen.

A ship’s lantern threw a sombre, distorting light over our group. Captain Dubosc was a black fellow—that is, extremely dark—as if from the sunburnt shore of the Mediterranean; not very tall, but enormously broad in

the shoulders, his face thin and keen. His officers, like their captain, seemed to be mostly from the south of France.

"What is it? Who are you?" he asked shortly.

"My name does not matter just now," I said, "but I want to tell you, Captain Dubosc, that your ship is watched at this very moment by an English spy. No movement that you can make will escape him, and he will send information that will lead to your capture. Come to the other side of the ship, and you can see the spy for yourself."

All the officers started forward eagerly to take a look, but Dubosc motioned them back.

"No," he said, "not too many; he would see us watching and take alarm."

He and I only slipped to the side nearest the shore, and crouching behind a gun sought the spy with our eyes. He was easily found, for the ship was not far from the wharf. There he was, walking back and forth, examining the ship, her yards, her masts, her sails, and then bending forward and turning his ear toward us in the attitude of one who would listen intently. It was evident that here was a man who did not intend to neglect the business upon which he had been sent. Even in that obscuring dusk his English traits showed. The little whiskers stood out like red fins from each side of his face, his nose was thrust well forward, and his whole attitude was aggressive.

"How will you get rid of him? How will you keep him from telling his knowledge?" I asked of Dubosc.

"Come with me and you shall see," he said. "We owe you thanks anyway, and now, having been warned, I trust that we French are not deficient in resources for our own protection."

He spoke with calm dignity, and seemed to be grateful, as he said he was, for my friendly word in time. I accepted his offer in like spirit. He ordered a boat to

be launched on the other side of the ship, and he, another officer, four men, and myself made up its crew. We pulled in the darkness toward the farther shore, and then, dropping down the river a little, returned and landed, leaving only one sailor to mind the boat. On the way I told him who I was.

Dubosc led the way, and having curved in toward the city we approached from the rear the spot where the spy most likely would be. Presently we saw his back. He was standing quite still, attentively regarding the ship, and evidently not suspecting our movements. Dubosc and two of his men slipped upon him, and at the same instant all three seized him and threw him down.

The Englishman uttered one brief cry, which was smothered in the beginning, and threw up his hands in a convulsive struggle, but all the French were upon him then, and in an incredibly brief space he was bound hand and foot and a handkerchief was stuffed so tightly into his mouth that he could make only a noise that sounded like a low moaning.

They turned him over on his face, and the man looked up at us with startled eyes. But in a moment or two this expression passed away and his face settled into a stolid calm which expressed nothing.

"Take him to the ship!" said Dubosc.

The sailors lifted him up, Dubosc whistled to his boatman, and in a minute the boat was brought to the bank nearest us. Nothing seemed to be stirring in the city behind us. The lights twinkled in white and blue points, and the river, with the shapeless ships upon it, was dark and silent, save for its soft murmur.

The sailors put the bound and gagged spy in the boat, and I, ignoring in my deep interest that my part of the affair was over, stepped in with them. Dubosc must have forgotten, too, for he said nothing, and all of us went on board La Rochelle together, first heaving the spy up to those waiting on the deck, as if he had been a

bundle of goods. They dropped him heavily upon the hard wood, and he lay there staring up with wide open eyes. Until then I had thought little of him as a man, looking at him merely as the agent of the British Government, but now that he was defeated I felt a sudden pity for him. Before he had seemed altogether commonplace, but now, in the light of the ship's lantern, his face looked clear cut and strong.

"What are you going to do with him?" I asked of Captain Dubosc. "I suppose you can't let him go to-night, can you?"

"No," he replied.

"That's true," I said; "he might give the warning. Suppose you take him down the river and turn him loose at the last land."

"No," he said again.

"What!" I exclaimed, "you don't mean to keep him a prisoner on your whole cruise, or carry him as such to France? Remember that you have taken him in an American port—a neutral port."

"No," he said a third time.

I looked at him more attentively. His lips parted in a slight smile. Slight as it was, it was enough to reveal the soulless character of the man.

"You don't mean that?" I cried.

"The far side of my ship is in complete darkness," he said quite coolly. "No one save ourselves can see what is passing there. This spy is bound hand and foot and gagged, we quietly drop him overboard, a plunk, and he is gone; there is no warning to the British fleet; there is no complication with the American Government or with anybody; La Rochelle passes out to sea and the whole affair is despatched neatly and cleanly, without fuss and without trouble; our great emperor himself would approve."

Horror seized me. It was true that the English and French were at war, but Philadelphia was a neutral port;

this would be an atrocious murder, and I, however good my intent, would be the chief cause of it.

One of the sailors had dragged the spy up into a sitting position with his back against a gun carriage, and there he sat doubled up with his eyes upon us. He could not fail to hear every word that was said, and I glanced at him. A little of the natural red was gone from his face, but otherwise his expression was unchanged, though he gazed at Dubosc and then at me, and then back at Dubosc with the most penetrating eyes that I ever saw in a man's head.

"You shall not commit such a murder, Captain Dubosc!" I exclaimed. "I am going ashore and this man is going with me. He shall be my prisoner to-night, and I will see that he says nothing about La Rochelle."

He shook his head. The spy's eyes were turned upon me now; they seemed to gleam through the darkness.

"Your suggestion is quite out of the question, Mr. Ten Broeck," said Captain Dubosc. "The man is ours to do with as we please. You can have him to-morrow, if you care to drag the river and find him. But we shall be far out at sea, and the American Government has far too much on hand to bother about so trifling a thing as the disappearance of an English spy."

This man was fit to be a buccaneer, not the captain of a great nation's war ship.

"I will not go ashore without him," I said.

"Then I fear you will not go at all," he replied. "It is a little late even now to leave us. Look!"

He pointed toward the shore. It was receding; the white and blue points of light twinkling in the city twinkled more dimly; I could hear more distinctly the swash of water along the sides of the ship, and above me the sails creaked. La Rochelle had started on her adventurous journey.

My body turned cold to the backbone for a moment,

and then I recovered myself. I saw that it was no time to become confused or excited.

"You dare not kidnap me, Captain Dubosc!" I said.

"Oh, no, we will not kidnap you," he said; "we do not impress you Americans as your friends the English do, but we will give you a pleasant voyage to France."

One of the officers, a young man of about my own age, grinned as if he thought it a good joke. I could have struck him in the face with pleasure, but I restrained myself. I appreciated my situation fully. I knew that they could carry me off to France, unless I was taken on the way by the English, which would be no improvement, and with nearly the whole world at war, my fate would be a small matter to distressed nations. I could rely only upon my own courage and dexterity.

"One must accept the decrees of fate like a philosopher," I said in a resigned tone, "and perhaps I shall enjoy a free trip to France. But let me take the gag out of that man's mouth, and ask him a question or two; it can't possibly do any harm."

Captain Dubosc assented more readily than I had expected.

"Remove the gag and ask him what you wish," he said.

I stooped over the spy. His eyes were upon me as if he would look through my body into my soul. His arms were tied, not together, but at his side with one wrapping of cord. I gave back his look, and his eyes, meeting mine, flashed. Bending lower I severed the cord that confined his arms with one sweep of the knife that I had taken from my pocket.

"Release yourself," I said, thrusting the knife into his freed right hand. Then I sprang upon Captain Dubosc.

In times of violence and peril it is a mighty thing to have the strength of a giant, and even in addition to the muscles and power which God had given me I had

the impulse of great excitement. The captain, his face showing terror, attempted to escape, but in an instant my arms were around him, and he was compressed in a hug which no five-foot-six Frenchman could resist. A groan came from him, and I swung him under my left arm, a slight bloody froth appearing upon his lips; then with my right hand I drew my pistol and faced the Frenchmen. It had all been done in thirty seconds, and when their hands flew to their swords the Englishman's wrists were free and their captain swung unconscious under my arm.

"I wish to go ashore, gentlemen," I said, "and take the English spy with me; if one of you draws his sword or levels his pistol upon me, I'll blow your captain's brains out."

"And if by any chance he should miss, I will do it for him," said a quiet voice at my shoulder.

The little English spy stood beside me, a pistol in his right hand and the knife with which I had freed him in his left. He said nothing more, but lined up by my side, as if we formed a whole regiment going into battle. Despite his cockney face, his ridiculous red whiskers, and his insignificant figure, he looked the true hero. It showed in his clear eyes, his firm chin, and his whole attitude.

The officers looked at us half in hesitation, half in fear. In the darkness sailors in the rigging, or hidden elsewhere, might have secured shots at us, but they had the double danger of the captain's death to follow, and of the reports being heard from the shore, with many complications as a sequel. So they stood in a confused group, still looking at us.

The ship was drifting slowly with the current, and the shores were of equal distance now—one side dark, and the points of light on the other growing fewer and fainter. The darkness hid the surface of the stream, save in a narrow circle around the ship, where the water

looked gray, almost black, and as we stood in silence on the deck, looking at each other, we could still hear its monotonous wash around the sides of La Rochelle.

I felt a kind of wild exhilaration, a sense of triumph over odds which never fails to exalt the spirits. With their captain under my arm, as a kind of pawn, I could defy a whole ship's crew, a war ship at that, a twenty-two-gunner to boot.

"Well, gentlemen," I said, "the boat in which we came is still trailing by the ship's side and waiting. I wish to go ashore with this Englishman."

Two of them began to whisper together.

"All I ask is personal safety for both of us," I said. "The Englishman shall be my prisoner until to-morrow, and I shall see that he sends no warning that can interfere with the escape of La Rochelle."

A lieutenant at last gave the word. A half dozen sailors had gathered and were looking at us. One of them lay hold of the rope and pulled the boat almost to the ship's side.

"Into her!" I said to the Englishman.

He dropped lightly into the centre of the boat. He could have cut the rope and rowed away with the oars that lay ready for his hand, but he did nothing of the kind. He held his pistol levelled ready for a shot, if it were needed, and with the other hand steadied the boat. Still holding Captain Dubosc under my arm, I dropped over the side and landed in the boat beside the spy.

"Hold, this is a breach of faith!" cried the lieutenant, rushing forward. "We have not tried to hurt you, and you are taking our captain with you."

"It is no breach of faith," I said; "we are not yet on shore, and you might even send a cannon ball after us in this boat. We merely carry our hostage as far as the land. Send a sailor with us to bring him and the boat back, or come yourself."

He signed to a sailor, who leaped into the boat with us. The Englishman cut the rope, and then he and the Frenchman took up the oars and pulled for the shore. I took Captain Dubosc from under my arm and held him in such a position that his body would protect the spy and me from any but the most skilful shot from the ship. He was beginning to recover from the affectionate hug which I had given him. His eyes opened languidly and he struggled a little, but I held him firm.

La Rochelle was almost stationary, merely drifting a little, and twenty or thirty men, officers and sailors, were clustered at her rail looking at us as we swiftly approached the shore. We had passed the city, and there were no lights in the darkness, save the few aboard the ship. The boat bumped suddenly against the bank. I released Captain Dubosc, and the English spy and I stepped out of the boat and upon the dry and solid earth, which felt very reliable and welcome beneath my feet after my experience with the treachery of ships and water.

"Good night, Captain Dubosc," I said; "and please remember, until you are out of it, that this is a neutral country, and we do not approve of murder here."

He was sitting upon one of the slides, all his strength returned, but he did not reply.

The spy and I stood side by side on the bank, watching the departing boat. The sailor was doing all the rowing, and the captain was sitting on a slide with his face toward us. The ship had swung toward the shore to meet him. I saw Dubosc say something to the sailor, and the boat began to curve around the ship, as if he would board her on the far side.

The little spy suddenly threw himself upon me with all his weight, seizing me by the shoulders and dragging me down. His action was so quick that I had no time to resist, and we fell in a heap. I heard the report of a pistol, and a bullet whistled through the air where my

head had been five seconds before. Dubosc was standing up in the boat, his empty pistol, still smoking at the muzzle, in his hand.

I sprang to my feet and snatched out my own pistol, but the boat had passed around the curve of La Rochelle's prow and Dubosc was hidden from me.

"I think we'd better step back a little," said the spy; "a treacherous shot from the ship would reach us."

We walked farther away, but La Rochelle changed her course again, and bore out toward the middle of the stream. I saw a short thick figure appear upon her deck, and I knew it was that of Captain Dubosc.

The spy and I stood where we were and watched La Rochelle fade away into the darkness, until only the gray river and the dim shores were left.

We stood there at least a minute staring at the bank of darkness into which the French sloop had disappeared. Then I turned to the spy.

"What is your name?" I asked.

"Henry Ketcham."

"Then I want to say, Mr. Henry Ketcham, that you pulled me down just in time."

"And I want to say, Mr. What's-your-name, that you cut the rope that tied my arms just in time."

"Which makes us even."

"Which makes us even."

I looked at him. His red whiskers, notched at the edge like a saw, stood out defiantly, but I liked the little scamp.

"What were you doing prowling around there watching that boat?" I asked.

"Saving my country. What were you doing prowling around there watching me?"

"Saving my country."

"Again we are even."

"Again we are even."

I liked him more and more.

"Remember, Mr. Henry Ketcham, of England," I said, "that you are my prisoner."

"All right, Mr. What's-your-name, I don't forget."

"Then pass me that pistol of yours."

He handed it to me.

"Any other weapon about you?" I asked.

"None."

"On your honour?"

"On my honour."

I thrust his pistol in my pocket to keep company with my own.

"I am responsible for your safety until about noon to-morrow," I said; "come."

He tramped along obediently by my side. Far away I saw a single dim ray, and I knew that it was one of the many lights of Philadelphia. Toward that light we trudged industriously.

I was in fine spirits.

We passed two or three watchmen, who looked inquiringly at the big man and the little man stalking solemnly side by side, Ketcham almost hid in my shadow, but they said nothing. At last we reached the tavern, and I notified the landlord that my friend, Mr. Ketcham, was to sleep in one of the beds in my room that night, and he said all right. The rooms in our American taverns often contain as many as four, five, or six beds, and the more tenants a landlord can find for them, the better for him.

We went up to my room and I lighted a candle.

"See that bed," I said to Ketcham, pointing to one in the corner. "You sleep there, and don't forget that you are my prisoner; don't go away in the night."

Then I tumbled into my own bed and slept well, being aided therein by a sound conscience and a satisfied mind.

I awoke late, and found that Ketcham was dressing.

"I was just going to waken you," he said; "I was afraid you'd sleep all day."

I thanked him and took him to breakfast. There I inquired about the French sloop of war *La Rochelle*. The night had been dark, had she taken advantage of it and slipped down the river? Yes, she had, and it was said that the English consul was in a great flurry about it, as he knew nothing of her departure until this morning, and he was afraid she would escape the English fleets on the coast. These were inquiries that I could make without arousing suspicion of anything more than a mere general interest, for naturally everybody was curious about the French sloop and her chances of escape.

Ketcham ate a very hearty breakfast. It is strange what a prodigious appetite little men often have.

As the English consul now knew of *La Rochelle's* departure it might seem that I had no further use for Ketcham; but not so. He might have some system of communication far surpassing that of the consul's, and I was bound to give *La Rochelle* a good start, Captain Dubosc or no Captain Dubosc. No; I would hold Ketcham for most of the day, thus making sure of him, and I determined, while I was about it, to enlighten him also, in order that there might be no waste of time.

"Are you through, Ketcham?" I asked, when I saw him wiping his lips with his handkerchief.

"Yes," he said, giving one longing look at the table, upon which nothing was left save the dishes.

"Then come with me."

We took our hats and walked out into the street. After a night of trouble or peril, the daylight is glorious, whether it comes with sunshine, or rain, or snow. This morning it came with sunshine, bright, shimmering, and pervading. It gilded the red bricks of Philadelphia, and crept into the darkest corners, covering dirt and soot

with leaf gold thinner, finer, and more lustrous than ever goldbeater beat.

I looked up at the sparkling heavens, and down at the gleaming city.

"Ketcham," I said, "it is better to be here than down yonder at the bottom of the river, tied hand and foot."

"Better, far better," he said in tones of deep conviction.

"Ketcham," I continued, "I am now going to take you on a little tour of the city for your own benefit."

"I shall be pleased to go with you," he replied.

I led him through the busy streets to Carpenters' Hall.

"Come in, Ketcham," I said. "There are some things in here that I want to show to an Englishman."

He followed me obediently into the building. I took him to the room in which the first Continental Congress had met.

"Ketcham," I said, "the first American Congress met here to devise plans to protect the thirteen colonies from the arrogance and tyranny of Great Britain and her ruler, George the Third. Take a good look at it, impress it on your memory."

He looked all around the room.

"You have seen it?" I asked.

"I have seen it."

"See that chair over there! I've no doubt that John Adams sat in it, and John Adams was a great and a wise man."

"I see it."

"And that other chair over there, perhaps Patrick Henry sat in it; Patrick Henry was a great and wise man too, and he made some good speeches about the arrogance and tyranny of kings."

"I see it."

"And who can say that the immortal George Wash-

ington himself has not looked through that window? You have heard of George Washington. He gave a great check to the pride of kings."

"I see the window. I have heard of him."

We walked solemnly out of Carpenters' Hall, and I took him to Independence Hall.

"Be sure to take off your hat when you enter here, Mr. Ketcham," I said.

"My hat is off," he replied.

He was holding it in his hand.

I led him to the room in which the Declaration of Independence was written and signed.

"Do you see this room, Mr. Ketcham?" I asked.

"I see it."

"Then remember it, for here was drawn up an immortal document, called the American Declaration of Independence, which will serve as a warning for all time to all monarchs and tyrants, especially those of Great Britain."

"I will remember it."

"See that chair over there; maybe in that very chair sat the great and glorious Thomas Jefferson, still living, thank Heaven; the man who wrote, 'All men are born free and with equal rights.'"

"I see it."

"And over there in that chair perhaps sat Benjamin Franklin, who was most potent in stirring the thirteen colonies to rightful rebellion against the tyranny of their English rulers."

"I see it."

"And that window over there—perhaps the famous Alexander Hamilton himself, the framer of our blessed Constitution, looked through it."

"I see it."

Hamilton wasn't there, but I didn't mind that.

We returned to the streets, and on our way to the tavern I said to Ketcham:

"See these streets, Mr. Ketcham; perhaps through this very street the discomfited Howe marched when he and the British army fled forever from Philadelphia."

"I see them."

We walked on. I felt pride and satisfaction; I had taught one Englishman a lesson. Little Ketcham trotted meekly by my side. Presently he pulled gently at my arm, and I stopped.

He pointed to a small building, over which floated the British flag.

"Ah, yes, I see," I said; "it is the home of the British consul."

"See that flag that the wind blows out from the staff above?" he said; "it is the flag that flew over the English ships in Aboukir Bay when they destroyed the great fleet that had brought Napoleon and his army to Egypt."

"I see it."

"Stand nearer the corner here, you can get a better view of it; that is the flag that streamed in the wind over the immortal Nelson and his men when they crushed the naval power of combined France and Spain on the bloody day of Trafalgar."

"I see it."

"Come to the edge of the sidewalk here and you can get a better view of the red in it; that's the flag that Marlborough carried at Blenheim, when the English won against odds one of the decisive battles of the world; it's the same flag that waved at Ramillies and Malplaquet, and it waved to the same purpose."

"I see it."

"Look how the wind sports around it, as if it liked it; that is the flag that Clive carried at Plassey, when England won a new world in Asia. Notice the flag well and remember it."

"I remember it."

"Come over here and you can get still another view

of it; that's the flag that waved over the fleet of Effingham when it turned back the Spanish Armada and saved the world from enslavement. Do you see it?"

"I see it."

We walked side by side, but in silence, to the tavern. There I announced to him that his term of imprisonment was over and he could go.

"But before you leave, Mr. Ketcham," I said, "I want to tell you that I like you."

"And I like you, Mr. Ten Broeck."

"Shake hands."

We shook, and he left.

I want to say again that he was a brave man, true grit, worthy to be a Kentuckian.

CHAPTER X.

ANOTHER SIDE OF A PURITAN.

It was my intention to leave the next morning for New York. Philadelphia had its attractions for me, but I had stayed long enough on the northward journey, and then New York would most likely offer pleasures, too, and I would have another chance at Philadelphia on the return trip.

I presented one of my letters to Hezekiah Broadbent, a rich merchant of the Quaker persuasion, by whom I was entertained most hospitably, though he seemed to think that the Western people were rough and wanting in a due respect for the richer and older East, and after a pleasant evening I strolled back to the tavern, where I found both Mercer and Courtenay waiting for me, much to my surprise and my equal pleasure. Mercer explained that legal business in Washington being so dull he had decided to take a northern journey, and Courtenay, who was doing nothing, readily agreed to come with him. They had arrived at the tavern in the evening stage-coach, and, hearing that I was there too, concluded to travel with me. Of course I was glad to have them, and asked them the news of Washington, was everybody well? and thus asking after each I came to Marian Pendleton.

"She is still the handsomest woman in Washington," said Mercer.

"Did she send any word to me?" I asked.

"No," he replied, a trifle shortly.

I took no offence, for a moment's reflection showed me that if she intended any message to me she would be likely to choose some other messenger.

I was delighted at the arrival of Mercer and Courtenay. I would now have comrades in seeing the world, and if the right of choice had been left to me I would have chosen these very two. Before going to breakfast in the morning I made an announcement.

"Boys," I said, "I have seen enough already to know that the tour of the North and the East in this good year 1811 is not without danger; remember that, whatever happens, we are to stick by each other."

"We three together!" we said, and, having pledged our faith as comrades in all sincerity, we took breakfast.

Major Northcote, who seemed to have become my shadow, or I his, was standing beside the stagecoach when we arrived there.

"You see you can not shake me off," he said jestingly.

He nodded to Mercer and Courtenay, whom he knew, and we took our places, as the driver cracked his whip for the start.

Now that we were on the high road between the largest two cities of the country we noticed that the travel was growing heavier, and we met people in their own coaches and others on horseback. Some of our passengers seemed to be men of note, substantial merchants of New York and Philadelphia travelling on business, and their talk was all of the prospective war and its effects upon trade. There were no women or children in the coach.

We made the acquaintance of these men very easily, and, at their suggestion, joined in the conversation with them. In the West we seldom looked beyond our own continent, and that had once been my own outlook, but I soon noticed that these Eastern merchants took a wider

view, and included all the lands and seas in their calculations.

I paid special attention to one of the merchants, a man of fifty or more, very staid and sober of countenance, and clothed in sombre garb, like a Quaker or Puritan. He asked me many sharp questions about the West, and I noticed that he used scriptural texts very freely. I set him down as a pious man from Boston or Salem. He seemed to be horrified at the thought of war.

"A war with Great Britain will be fatal to our seaboard towns," he said.

I did not think we should sacrifice everything for the sake of the seaboard towns, and said so, but he was aghast at the suggestion, thus giving me a good idea of the timidity with which wealth views all political disturbances.

Finding that we were from Washington, and that I had been in the Government service, they put us to as searching a cross-examination as a lawyer ever inflicts upon a witness. But we were in nowise loath, and answered all their questions about the disposition of the Government, and the pressure put upon it by others, as directly and promptly as we could. The puritanical looking man was the shrewdest of our questioners, and I soon discovered that he was really a merchant of Boston, and that his name was Jonathan Starbuck.

Thus talking, we became well acquainted with each other, all except Major Northcote, whose silence the others respected, for they saw at once that he was not an American, and we three did not even say that we knew him.

I did not notice until we were far on the road to New York that the fair weather with which we had started was not to accompany us all the way. In fact, the warmth had been a little too great for that time of the year. The atmosphere soon became close, and the wind ceased. One breathed then with difficulty, as if the heavi-

ness of the air clogged the lungs. The conversation began to lag, for it was an effort to talk. In the southeast a little cloud appeared, just peeping over the rim of the earth.

The driver whipped his horses, and they broke into a trot. As they were a fresh relay, and we had a good bit of road before us, the coach spun along at a fine gait. It rattled much, and hub complained loudly to axle, but the increased speed created a breeze for us which cooled our faces, and to some extent the air came purer to our lungs.

On the heavy coach swept, and Felix called my attention to the cloud in the southwest. It was not now a baby cloud hugging the earth, but in the vigour of growing and increasing youth was creeping up the circle of the southwestern heavens, large enough to fling a gray shadow over that part of the earth.

When we stopped at a little brook to water the horses, the air became breathless again. Trees, twigs, blades of grass were as stiff as if they were made of immovable stone. The heat seemed to increase, and the air became denser and heavier.

The southwest began to groan, and the darkness spread from that quarter to all the heavens. The air was gray and misty. All of us were silent, watching the storm as it came. The western clouds turned from gray into a black, through which a dark blue tint shone. Suddenly they parted, as if beneath the stroke of a sword, and a long streak of fire, extending from the centre of the heavens to the western earth, cut the sky. Most of us started in our seats.

The groaning had swelled into a loud moaning, and the leaves and the grass began to flutter as they felt the first breath of the coming gale. Far off we could see the rain streaks borne toward us on the wind.

We quickly pulled the leather flaps over the roof and sides of the coach, but by the time we had finished the

task the moaning had risen to a roar, and trees, bushes, and grass were whipped by the wind.

Between the edges of the flaps I watched the coming of the rain, which moved toward us—a dark bank, as distinct as a giant wave. Then, with a rush and a howl, wind and rain were upon us. If their coming was like a great wave, our coach was like a boat struck by it. It rocked under the force of the tempest, and for a moment I thought we would go over on our side. The horses, stung by the rain, which was driven against them like sleet, reared and twisted about in their gear, adding to the alarm of solid and respectable merchants, and increasing the chance of an overturned coach.

The driver sprang out and seized one of the horses by the head.

“Here, some of you help me!” he shouted.

Courtenay, Mercer, and I were out of the coach in a moment, making a man for each horse. Thus we held them steady while the storm shrieked over our heads, dashing fragments of boughs past us and howling through the woods like lean wolves after a buck. We were wet to the bone in half a minute, but we were the youngest and the duty was ours, and travellers who would see the world must expect hardships.

“We’ll lead them up by the side of that hill yonder,” said the driver; “it will shelter us partly from the storm.”

We led the frightened horses forward. The water was pouring already along the road, and the mud was deepening under our feet. It splashed in lumps into our faces under the tread of the horses, but with a steep hill on the western side of us we were protected from the full force of the storm, and the horses became quiet.

Then my comrades and I climbed back into the coach and watched the wild sweep of the rain over the lonesome country. There was some thunder, distant and low, and

now and then the lightning flickered across the sky, but it was too early in the season for much thunder and lightning, and the storm, after its first whoop and rush, settled into a steady chilling rain, pouring out of a sky of solid leaden gray, unrelieved by the tiniest wisp of white. This discouraged us, for we saw now that it was not a storm of the kind soon come, soon gone, but one that would follow us long on our journey to New York.

The horses shivered in the chilling pour. The air turned much colder, and Courtenay, Mercer, and I, who were wet through, managed to get a change of clothing out of our travelling bags and to transfer ourselves into the dry garments. The leather curtains of the coach were drawn as closely as possible, but the edge of the rain, driven by the wind like the spray of the ocean, penetrated the cracks now and then and stung our faces.

We stayed there an hour, and, the tempest having abated, though the rain still fell, the driver announced that we must start again.

"It'll be hard travelling," he said, "but there's no help for it."

He gave the word to the horses, they strained at the gear, and the heavy vehicle lumbered slowly through the mud, which was now very deep in the road.

"It's even harder than I expected," said the driver, "but I guess we can make it to Trenton to-night, though we'll be mighty late."

On we crawled through the mud. The horses' feet sank in it with a plunk, and it flew high in the air at every step they took. Large deposits of New Jersey's richest soil gathered upon the horses, the coach, and even upon us, for the rain had abated so far now that we could dispense with the leather flaps.

We settled into a solemn and gloomy silence, for we felt that the elements were treating us badly, and we had no desire to be cheerful. Of a sudden there was a snap

like a pistol shot, and the front end of the coach settled comfortably down toward the earth. The driver swore rich, profuse oaths. I knew what was the matter without the telling of it. The front axle had unkindly broken, and the travels of that coach were over for the present.

We climbed out and looked disconsolately about us. Then the driver spoke up. "As we can't get to Trenton," he said, "we must pass the night somewhere else. Across those woods yonder there's a farm house that I know. Maybe we can get some kind of food and shelter there."

He volunteered to go, if any one would go with him, and see what could be done for us at the farm house. I offered myself immediately, and so did Courtenay and Mercer. The others, being older, were willing to stay in the coach until we returned with our news.

Off we went across a field, and then into the woods. The rain had now ceased and there were some breaks in the clouds, though a shadow far down on the western horizon told us of coming night. We tramped through the dripping woods, but we were cheerful again, for the tide of life rose too high in us three to be checked.

"The house that we are going to," said the driver, "belongs to an old fellow named Moore, as sour as vinegar, but as rich as cream. He has neither child nor wife, and only two black servants live with him. He'll take us in if we pay him well."

We reached the house, a solid two-story structure of heavy logs, standing in a small yard, inclosed by a high rail fence, staked and ridered. Moore, a hard-faced man of sixty, appeared in the doorway. He was short and crusty in his answers, but said he was willing to keep us for the night if we would pay his price, and show in advance that we had the money. We took out of our pockets gold enough to settle a night's lodging for a large party and jingled it in his face until his eyes glis-

tened at the mellow clink. Then we returned for the rest of our shipwrecked mariners.

We left the broken coach in the road and all went to Moore's house, taking the horses with us. The animals were put in a stable in the rear of the dwelling, where the driver attended to them himself, while we gathered in a group in one of the rooms of the house and waited for supper. The two black servants, of whom the driver had spoken, a middle-aged man and his wife, both very sour and grim, appeared at intervals, passing through the room on their way to their duties, though neither spoke to us.

But we were a merry party now, since we were warm and dry, and the pleasant odours that tickled our noses told of good things to come. Joke and story went around, even Major Northcote seeming to share in the general good humour, and the best story-teller was the favourite. It is not your pious men who prosper in their travels.

We were in a large apartment, a kind of dining room, sitting room, and bedroom combined. At one end was a wide fireplace, in which a small fire was burning, for the evening was chill. Strings of red pepper and popcorn and small smoked hams hung over the mantel. This looked comfortable and homelike, despite the scanty furniture of the room and its general slipshod appearance. The fireplace, with its smoked adornments, reminded me of our kitchen at home in Kentucky, and it was easy then to conjure up pleasant visions.

The black woman came in and spread the table, and supper was brought to us—bacon crisply fried, eggs turned over, hot biscuits with yellow butter, dried apples stewed, and extremely good coffee. It was a much better supper than we had expected, and though we were to pay for it nobly, which was so much extra in the cost of our journey, we did not mind it just then, and became as merry as kings, or as merry as kings ought to be, considering that they do little but try to enjoy themselves.

But an end must come to the play of knife and fork, and that end came for us at last. We leaned back in our chairs and sighed with content. The driver, who sat at the head of the table, a place that he deserved if ever man did, looked down at us with twinkling eyes.

"Gentlemen," he said, "I have saved the best for the last. I have been in Mr. Moore's house before, and I know its resources. Mr. Moore, will you not send Sam for the large brown jug? Remember that we exchange gold for it."

Our landlord nodded to the black man, and Sam went out, returning presently with a capacious jug, to which much dust and some straws clung. The driver pulled the stopper, and a penetrating odour of the most pleasant quality arose and permeated the room as he filled all our glasses with the precious old whisky. Then we drank, for we had been in the wet and cold, and the blood rose to our heads and we talked in loud voices; nor did we spare the rich liquor and content ourselves with a single drink. The jug went around once, twice, and again.

Our elders were setting us an example—of what kind I don't pretend to say. Talk and laugh grew louder, glass clinked against glass, and the big brown jug nobly gave up its contents.

"A merry evening is not merry without a song," said some one.

"A song! A song!" repeated the others.

"Who can sing?" I asked.

"I can," said Jonathan Starbuck, prim Puritan merchant of Boston, standing up.

We cheered with clap of hand and stamp of feet. He unbuttoned his coat and threw it back to give his chest and lungs room. The ordinary sober brick-red of his face had brightened into crimson, and his eyes were gleaming.

"Lads," he said, "did you ever hear of a ship called

the Bon Homme Richard, and a captain named Paul Jones?"

"Yes! yes!" we shouted.

Every child in America knew how Paul Jones and the Bon Homme Richard had taken the Serapis. I looked around to see in what manner Major Northcote would take this, but he had quietly left the room.

"I wish I'd been there," said Courtenay.

"I was there!" said the old merchant. "I fought on the deck of the Bon Homme Richard, when our shoes ran blood, and Paul Jones, whether to fight or to sail, was the best of all the captains that sailed the seas! A pirate, the English called him, but they would have been willing to pay their weight in gold for a few pirates like him!"

"A cheer for the veteran of the Bon Homme Richard," called Courtenay.

The roof quivered and the windows rattled.

The old merchant stood before us, his face flushing with pride as the last echo of our cheer died. But he was not a merchant now, the fire in his eyes was not that of the trader of nearly sixty. It belonged to the wild boy of twenty, who fought while his ship sank under him, and, cutlass in teeth, climbed with Paul Jones, through the smoke and flame, to the enemy's deck and made it his own, by the right of the strongest and the bravest.

"Yes," he said, "I was there, and I saw and I heard it all: a hell of blood and steel and blazing gunpowder and dripping flesh, but a hell in which I am proud to have had my part, old as I am. But I was with him, too, when we showed our heels to the hostile fleets, and it is of such a time that I'll sing you a song. Listen! It's like the sea now, when the night's dark and wild. Hear the shriek of the wind and the beat of the raindrops on the window panes! The old ship rides the waves now, and, with Paul Jones on the poop, she laughs at storms!"

I was on a ship sure enough, for the room was rocking just like a ship in a sea, and did not the cry of the wind without tell of high waves chasing each other over the angry ocean?

Resting one hand upon the table, Starbuck sang, in a deep, mellow, and rolling bass voice that rose far above the whistle of the wind or the beat of raindrop on window pane:

'Tis of a gallant Yankee ship that flew the Stripes and Stars,
And the whistling wind from the west-nor'west blew through the
pitch-pine spars.

With her starboard tack aboard, my boys, she hung upon the gale.
On an autumn night we raised the light on the old head of Kinsale.

It was a clear and cloudless night, and the wind blew steady and
strong,

As gayly over the sparkling deep our good ship bowled along;
With the foaming seas beneath her bow the fiery waves she spread,
And bending low her bosom of snow, she buried her lee cathead.

There was no talk of short'ning sail by him who walked the poop,
And under the press of her pond'ring jib the boom bent like a hoop,
And the groaning waterways told the strain that held her stout
main tack.

But he only laughed as he glanced abaft at a white and silvery
track.

The mid-tide meets in the channel waves that flow from shore to
shore,

And the mist hung heavy upon the land from Featherstone to Dun-
more,

And that sterling light on Tuskar rock, where the old bell tolls the
hour,

And the beacon light that shone so bright was quenched on Water-
ford tower.

What looms up on the starboard bow? What hangs upon the breeze?
'Tis time our good ship hauled her wind abreast the old Saltees;
For by her ponderous press of sail and by her consorts four,
We saw our morning visitor was a British man-of-war.

Up spoke our noble captain then, as a shot ahead of us passed,
"Haul snug your flowing courses, lay your topsail to the mast."
The Englishmen gave three loud hurrahs from the deck of their
covered ark
And we answered back by a solid broadside from the deck of our
patriot bark.

"Out booms! Out booms!" our skipper cried. "Out booms and
give her sheet."
And the swiftest keel that was ever launched shot ahead of the
British fleet.
And amid a thundering shower of shot, with stunsails hoisting
away,
Down the North Channel Paul Jones did steer, just at the break of
day.

The singer gathered enthusiasm and his song force
and volume as he went, and when he turned back and
sang it again, we joined him in the rousing lines, with
such a chorus that it was not the beat of raindrop and
the rush of wind alone that made the window panes
rattle. I was sure I was at sea now, because I was rock-
ing more than ever and I could hear the shriek of the
wind through the sails and see the flying foam that the
ship left in her track as her nose took the waves, and
even hear the guns of Paul Jones as the "swiftest keel
that was ever launched shot ahead of the British fleet,"
giving it a leaden salute as it flew.

"Now, all together," said the old Puritan, and we
thundered out:

The mid-tide meets in the channel waves that flow from shore to
shore,
And the mist hung heavy upon the land from Featherstone to Dun-
more,
And that sterling light on Tuskar rock, where the old bell tolls the
hour,
And the beacon light that shone so bright was quenched on Water-
ford tower.

We stopped, for the old Puritan had put his hands to his eyes, and I thought I saw a tear shining on the lid.

"If I were only twenty again," he said, "money and everything else I have might go to the bottom of the sea! Make me twenty again, and put me on a Yankee deck with a captain like Paul Jones, and I ask no more! They boast themselves the rulers of the sea, lads, and so they are when it's French and Spaniard and Portuguese they have to fight, but in the days of Paul Jones we were as good as they, and now we are better, man for man, gun for gun, and ship for ship. I tell you, it's so, lads. And if the war comes, John Bull will get his face burned, and his heart will be made sick."

Again the room resounded with our cheers. I had heard something like this from Charlton in Washington, but still, in my cooler moments, I did not believe that our twenty little ships could do anything against their thousand.

Then we gave a cheer for Jonathan Starbuck, Puritan and veteran of the Bon Homme Richard, and another for Paul Jones, and another for the Yankee navy, and another for ourselves, and another for everybody who liked us, and then we stopped because we had no more voices.

Mr. Starbuck sank down in his chair and again put his hand over his face.

"God forgive me," he groaned, "for letting myself be led off again by the lust of blood, the hell of battle!"

"You were a hero, fighting for your country," I said.

"I am more than fifty years old," he said, "and an enemy of war. God forgive me!"

He slipped away from the table, and presently our little party broke up, it being full time. Besides, the dining room was now needed as a bedroom.

Some of us were provided with beds, and some were not. I was one of the "some were not," and six and a

half feet of the dining-room floor were allotted to me. I did not mind, as I was used to roughing it, and to a man who had slept out under trees a hard floor for a bed is a small matter.

I had two blankets from farmer Moore to put beneath me, and my heavy rough overcoat to spread over me. I took off my ordinary coat, and put it under my head as a pillow. Courtenay, Mercer, and two others also slept on the dining-room floor. The driver was the last to make ready for sleep, and he blew out the light and lay down.

It was still raining. I could hear it as the drops were driven against the thin glass by the irregular bursts of wind. It seemed to be very dark, too, for when the two candles were blown out but little light came through the window. The reek of food and of the whisky that had been drunk impregnated the air of the room, but we were all too sleepy to care. Besides, I was still at sea, though the waves were not rolling so high as they were a half hour before. Some dogs outside howled at the moon, which they could not see. There was rhythm in their howls, and that and the gentle rocking of the room like a cradle lulled me. I went to sleep, and with great promptness proceeded to have a nightmare.

A large man threw me down and sat upon my chest, crushing bone and body. My muscles became limp, and my breath seemed to cease. I could not make any effort, I could not even will to move, but I could feel the sweat rising upon my forehead, and I could see that the two eyes in the man's head were not eyes at all, but two coals of fire.

Just at the moment when I had resigned myself to death, I awoke and found that I was wholly alive. No man was sitting on my chest, and all in the room except myself were sleeping well, if the sound of loud breathing could be taken as proof. The air there was still heavy and thick, and knowing very well what had ailed me I slipped

my coat on, and passing into the hall opened the front door and breathed the fresh air of the night. It was still raining, and the darkness hung heavy, but I put my head out and let the wind dash the cold drops in my face. It was wonderfully refreshing after my nightmare and the close, hot room. I drew my head back, and the voice of Major Northcote asked:

“Do you feel better after your revel, Philip?”

He was standing there fully dressed, and in reply to my questioning look said:

“I could not sleep because of the noise you and your comrades made, being an old man and a light sleeper at the best.”

“Why do you call it a revel?” I asked in reply to his first question, which plainly had been asked with sarcastic intent.

“Was not that the name for it?” he replied, “or was it too mild? It would be better to say a common drinking bout. And that old Boston merchant, too, singing a wild song, as if he were a reckless boy. You have no dignity in this country.”

He was sneering now.

“Perhaps it was the best impulse in him that made him sing that song,” I retorted; “and if you call drinking a lack of dignity, then there is not much dignity to waste in your beloved England.”

“That is beside the mark,” he replied; “but I can tell you again, Cousin Philip, that I am sorry to see you in such company and liking it. I offered you other and greater opportunities once, a chance for a career among people who are not provincials. How can you live a full life here? Have you not begun to see yet the worth of what you have refused so lightly?”

I could not tell whether he was speaking from regard, or what he thought to be regard, of me, or because he believed he saw a chance to attack us.

“The people at whom you are sneering are quite good

enough for me," I said, "and, besides, they are my own. I wish no others."

"As you choose," he said. "A man has a right to his own opinion, however bad it may be. But lest you should wonder what has become of me, I tell you that I am to leave early in the morning by a private conveyance that I have obtained from the man who owns this house."

Again I wished him a safe journey, but secretly I trusted that he would sail for England as soon as he could. Then I went back to the room, and soon fell into a sounder and better sleep.

CHAPTER XI.

WE SEE A PLAY.

I AWOKE the next morning with Mercer pulling my arm.

“Are you going to sleep all day?” he asked. “Your kinsman, Major Northcote, has gone already, and breakfast is waiting for the rest of us.”

The company was rather grim and quiet at the breakfast table, and Major Northcote’s early departure alone caused no comment. An hour or two later another coach from Philadelphia for New York, fortunately with but few passengers, picked us up, and we continued our journey along a muddy road, but on a day of sunshine and brightness, over an earth on which the hues of spring were deepening. Night was coming when we reached Paulus Hook, and taking the boat in order to cross the North River we saw the lights of New York twinkling on the farther shore. As our company was about to separate Mr. Starbuck, who knew that we would come to Boston, asked us to visit him there, and promised to give us any help that he could.

We had selected Fraunce’s Tavern as our stopping place, and being somewhat wearied by the long journey we proceeded to it at once.. Early the next morning I went to the new City Hall to present one of my letters from Mr. Gallatin to Mayor Jacob Radcliffe. He received me in kindly fashion, promised to give me all the assistance he could, and asked me to call upon him at his house. I thanked him, and, noticing that others were waiting to

see him, I went out and rejoined Courtenay and Mercer, who were waiting in the fine little park on the north side of which the City Hall stands. At the southeast corner of the park we saw another building that attracted my attention, and which a watchman told us was the famous Park Theatre.

We approached the theatre more closely and saw from some bills printed in very large letters that George Frederick Cooke, the renowned English actor, was to play Richard III there that night. This was an opportunity that none of us dreamed of missing.

I bought three tickets for the evening's performance, and then we strolled through the city, noting the great business and activity of its people and the large amount of building that was going on, despite the heavy losses caused by the embargo and the confiscation of our ships by England and France. We soon wandered to the north end of the town to Canal Street, as they now call the new avenue across the island, through the centre of which flowed the canal dug by the Dutch, generations ago. The work on this fine avenue had just been completed. It was one hundred feet wide, with the ditch or little canal flowing down the centre, while on each side was a broad drive lined with fine residences. There were shade trees and some benches, and we took seats on one of the latter to enjoy the bright morning.

Presently a wisp of a man came along and sat down on one end of our bench. He was of my own age, but very far from my size. His raiment was abundant and gorgeous to behold, the most brilliant portions of it being an embroidered waistcoat, which flamed in the rays of the sun, and a great blue silk muffler or tie wound around his throat. He carried a large cane, which at intervals he twirled skilfully and daintily around his fingers, and he had sprinkled himself with such strong perfumes that the wind got a touch of them all.

Presently his cane, in one of its many revolutions,

struck lightly against me. I expected him to ask my pardon, but not seeming to notice it he continued his twirling of the cane and his bowings to the ladies, varying both now and then with a great yawn.

"Sir, you owe me an apology," I said, tapping him on the shoulder, not really caring for the blow but curious to hear what he would say.

He looked at me as if he had not noticed my presence before.

"Ah, true, I forgot," he said, smothering a yawn with a small white hand that had rings on it. "Consider it done."

He interested me and I pursued the subject.

"Sir," I said, "I do not consider anything done until it is done."

"Then I apologize," he said in languid tones.

He said nothing more for some time, and we sat watching the people. A dozen marines in the English uniform passed. I guessed that they were a detachment from the British war ships on watch at the entrance to the harbour, and my heart burned at this evidence of our disgrace and of Great Britain's arrogance and hostility.

"They should not be allowed to put foot on shore," I said to Courtenay. "These are the men who impress and murder our sailors, confiscate our ships, and insult us all over the world."

"We'll fight 'em yet," said Felix.

"And if you fight them, do you think you will whip them?" asked the fop, suddenly speaking up.

"I would think very little of the American who didn't think so," said Mercer.

"I don't think it," said the dandy. "Don't you know that Great Britain is the most glorious of all nations?"

"Her greatness and glory may be what you say," I said, "but she is also the most bitter and arrogant enemy that we have."

"All our fault! all our fault!" he said, waving his cane. "We should not have rebelled against her kind care and protection. Naturally she chastises us now with a firm hand. But his Majesty and his advisers mean it for our own good, and, besides, they are engaged now in a mortal struggle to save the world from the dominion of the usurper, despot, and tyrant, Bonaparte."

This was a little more than I expected. I had heard that there were some fops and half-breed Americans in the Eastern cities who preached such a doctrine, but I did not look for anything so extreme. Such talk would have sounded perfectly natural from Major Northcote.

"Do you, then," I asked, "defend Great Britain in her aggressions upon us?"

"Certainly," he replied with much superciliousness. "With our chaotic government we are bound to go to pieces in time, and we will be reannexed by her. She has the only proper and permanent form of government."

This was the man, and not I, to whom Major Northcote should have preached his doctrines.

"Do you want a king?" I asked.

"Why, yes, of course!"

"Then you should emigrate."

"We shall see who is to emigrate," he said.

He began to twirl his cane again, and whistled some foreign air. In a few minutes he rose and strolled away, still whistling and twirling his cane.

"A curious little fellow," said Mercer, looking after the little woman-man.

"At any rate, we'll never see him again," said Courtenay, "and I'm glad of it. But I wonder what his name is."

We continued our wanderings about the city, but returned to our tavern before dusk, wishing to array ourselves in our best for the play, as we understood that it was very fashionable and a great crowd was likely to be present. These toilets completed to our satisfaction we

went to the theatre, and found that the people were arriving already. Our tickets gave us seats close to the stage, where the view would be good, but I found some difficulty in disposing of my knees. Then we watched the people enter. I recognised Mayor Radcliffe as he passed to his box, and another man, who came in a moment later, was, as I learned afterward, the celebrated De Witt Clinton, then a candidate for the lieutenant-governorship of the State, much to the surprise of everybody, who thought him above anything but the governorship. He was followed soon by Governor Tompkins himself, who was down on a short visit from Albany. We saw also the people of New York, those noted for wealth and social position, and the theatre, when it was filled, was the most glittering show that I had ever beheld, both the men and the women being dressed with great richness.

But the curtain rose on the plots and passions of the humpbacked Richard, and while I was absorbed in the play a little man pushed by me, followed by two or three others. It seemed to me to be an affront to everybody that they should come in so late, disturbing more punctual people and forcing a large man like myself to shove his knees under him that they might have room to pass. This annoyance was not decreased when I looked around and saw that the little man was the fop with whom we had had the small passage of words in the morning, and whom I had never expected to see again. He sank down in the seat on my right, Courtenay and Mercer being on my left, and, putting a little round glass to his eye, stared at me for a moment with an air of languid insolence. Then he turned and talked in exhausted tones to his companions. I heard something about "Western giant," but caught nothing more, as I turned my attention to the stage, though I had taken time to notice that his three companions were men of the same stripe as himself.

When the first act closed and the curtain fell, the fops began to talk and to tell each other how tiresome it all was. There were no real actors now, at least one would have to go to Europe to see them, and nobody would expect a player of great merit to come to such a country as this. I had an idea that they meant to annoy us, and soon became convinced of it, for they looked directly at us.

"If you don't like the play," I said to the little man, "why did you come? One does not come here to do penance."

He put his glass again to his eye and gave me a very supercilious stare.

"Do you know," said he, "that it is my own exclusive business whether I like the play or not?"

"I beg your pardon, sir," I said; "you may have the right not to like it, but we also have the right to demand that you keep your opinions to yourself and not disturb the audience by uttering them."

The fop was about to reply, but the curtain was rising on another act, and our neighbours were demanding silence so emphatically that he was compelled to obey. I was glad of it, as I wanted to watch the play, and, besides, it was no place for petty wrangling. I was already ashamed of my part in it.

The curtain went down again, and the people began to talk.

"Mr. Cooke is a great actor," I said.

"But he is an Englishman," spoke up the little fop in an ironical tone, "and surely you will not admit that an Englishman can do anything well."

"His nationality is nothing to me," I said. "I speak only of the actor."

"I have no doubt," he said in the same ironical tone, "that he will be extremely pleased to hear that he has won the approval of a young man just from the banks of the Ohio."

"I'll thank you not to speak to me again," I said. "I don't want to be seen in conversation with you. I don't know any of these people around us, but I may in time, and they would remember it against me."

His eyes flashed angrily at me, but the curtain was rising on the last act and I turned my eyes to the stage, where I kept them until the play was over.

There was a great bustle and much noise as the people rose to go. They began to talk of the play and many things as they put on their cloaks and other wraps. I came back with regret from the victorious field of Bosworth to the year of my own time—1811.

"Will you kindly let us pass?"

It was the little fop who was speaking, and while his words were polite his tone was not.

"You are blocking up all the aisle with your large Western body," he continued.

His comrades laughed, and he made some more sneering allusions to what he was pleased to consider my lack of tone and fashion, assuming that I was ignorant because I came from the West. He was decidedly insulting, and I know my face turned red. Courtenay and Mercer too looked angry.

"Just a moment," I said politely, "and I will clear the way for you."

I had brought my heavy frieze overcoat with me, thinking that the night might turn cold, as spring was as yet by no means a certainty in the New York latitude. I put my arms through the sleeves, drew the coat upon my shoulders, and hastily began to button it, that I might move on and give the little man and his comrades a clear path. The fop was standing almost against me, holding his cane stiffly and perpendicularly in his hand, like a soldier with a bayonet at drill. He, too, wore a big coat, with the edges sticking out in front like great frills.

In my haste, I will not undertake to account for it

otherwise, we were so close together, I buttoned the button of my overcoat into the buttonhole of his, and then started quickly to leave the theatre, Courtenay and Mercer going on ahead.

"I will not delay you further," I said as I took the first step. "I apologize for the inconvenience that I have caused you already."

Nearly all of the people were out of the theatre, and hence there was nothing to prevent my hurrying. But when I had got a dozen steps, cries and curses arose, and I noticed something dragging at me.

"Release me, sir! Release me! What do you mean by such a gross insult? This is unpardonable! Release me this instant!"

I looked down in surprise, and there, pinned like a bouquet to the second button of my overcoat, was that little man; but failing to appreciate the honour, he was as red as a tomato in the face, and was crying out and squirming like a butterfly.

"I beg your pardon," I cried as I unbuttoned him from me and put him safely on his feet on the floor. "I hope you will forgive me. It was an accident—an awkward one—but still an accident. I did not notice, and I trust you will overlook it."

I thought I would try some of the sarcasm of which he seemed to be so fond, and it was effective. The red in his face deepened; in fact, I imagined that I could see a purple streak in it.

"You have insulted me and exposed me to ignominy before all these people," he cried, "and you will have to give me satisfaction!"

About a dozen people were still left in the theatre, and they stopped and looked at us with amusement and curiosity.

"But he has apologized already," said Courtenay, in the corners of whose mouth I could see a faint smile. "What else do you ask?"

"Take that, and I will let you know later," he said furiously, thrusting a small card into my hand.

I looked at it and read, engraved in its centre, this large name:

HORACE WALPOLE VAN STEENKERK.

"What am I to do with this?" I asked, not yet suspecting his meaning.

"Keep it," he said, "and I will let you know. That is my name, sir."

"Let me see it," said Mercer, reaching over and taking it from my hand. He examined it critically.

"The name is too large for you, Mr. Van Steenkerk," he said, "and, besides, it's too much of a mixture; the first half is English, decidedly English, but the last half is Dutch, decidedly Dutch."

"My family is one of the oldest, and therefore one of the best in New York," said the little man proudly, "and my name is representative of my blood and race—pure Dutch on my father's side, pure English on my mother's side."

"Therefore you can not take an insult," said one of his friends, "and this gentleman must fight you."

"That is so!" said Mr. Van Steenkerk emphatically.

I was astonished. I had not suspected so much.

"Do you mean that I must fight a duel with you?" I asked.

"Certainly, unless you are afraid," replied Mr. Van Steenkerk.

Now, we fought duels in Kentucky and Tennessee, but here in the North and East they were condemned, which seemed to me an entirely proper view to take of them. Moreover, the great shock caused by the killing of Mr. Hamilton by Mr. Burr in sight of this very city was remembered by everybody.

New York was the last place in which I expected to receive a challenge to a deadly combat.

"Nonsense," said Mercer quickly; "my friend, Mr. Philip Ten Broeck, of Kentucky, is not afraid of you or anybody else; but he, like Mr. Courtenay and myself, thinks it absurd to fight a duel over such a trivial matter. There is no cause of quarrel; you can not name one yourself."

But they would have it that I must fight, and their belligerency increased with our reluctance. The cooler our tempers became, the warmer grew theirs. Mr. Van Steenkerk's chief friend was introduced as Mr. Percy Knowlton; the names of the others I forget. We gave them our names, and, as they were turning out the lights and closing the theatre, we walked out into the park together, where we stopped in a group.

"Then," said Courtenay, "you gentlemen can not rest satisfied unless our Mr. Ten Broeck fights your Mr. Van Steenkerk."

"Unless he is willing to be branded as a coward," said Mr. Knowlton.

"That, of course, is impossible," said Courtenay, "and since you have no other alternative, Ten Broeck shall fight him."

"But I don't want to," I protested.

"You shall do it nevertheless," said Courtenay firmly. "The choice of weapons is ours. We will meet you somewhere to-morrow and arrange the details; where shall it be?"

"I would propose the old duelling ground at Weehawken," said Mr. Knowlton, "but it would be better not to go there. But I know a good quiet spot over on Long Island that will do."

He named a place far back of the little town of Brooklyn, near the sea, and described it so that we could not miss it.

We agreed to this, and saying good night to each other very politely went to our respective lodgings.

Courtenay, Mercer, and I had a bed each in a large room on the third floor of Fraunce's Tavern. Felix lighted the lamp, and we sat down and looked at each other. I was in no very good humour, and I was willing to say that I was not.

"What do you mean, Felix," I asked, "by making me fight that little fellow with the big English-Dutch name? Why, I can't fight such a man!"

"You can and you shall," said Courtenay.

"But," I protested, "I was sent up here on important business by the Government, and I have no right to fight. I wouldn't mind it so much if he were a man of near my own size, but I couldn't kill a doll like that; it would be a disgrace, and it would be a still greater disgrace to be killed by him."

Both Mercer and Courtenay laughed.

"But you will have to fight, Phil," said Courtenay; "if you don't those fellows will post you all over town as a coward, and you can't stand that, however much you may be opposed to duelling. It would be a life-long disgrace to you at home. You are in this mud-dle, and you will have to fight your way out of it, literally."

I recognised the truth of what he said.

"Sit there," he continued, "and Tom and I will talk this over. Remember that you are completely in our hands, and will have nothing to do until you face your antagonist and the word is given to you to fight."

They withdrew into a corner and began to talk in low tones, while I sat in my chair and stared glumly through the window at the darkness. I was both angry and ashamed at being drawn into such an affair, and my shame was all the greater because I believed that it was partly my own fault. I should have treated the little dandy with contempt, ignoring all his sneers. Evi-

dently he was not a coward, whatever his other faults might be.

Courtenay and Mercer announced that the conference was over, and we went to bed. Wearied by the events of the day, I slept soon and soundly, despite the prospects for the morrow.

CHAPTER XII.

AT THE DUELLING GROUND.

WE awoke early, and Courtenay went out to the shops to buy some things which he said he needed. He returned presently with two or three bundles, but I did not ask him about them, having the business with Van Steenkerk on my mind. Then, at Courtenay's suggestion, we ate a good solid breakfast.

"A general always likes to feed his soldiers well before going into battle," said Courtenay, "and Mercer and I will do that much for you. We can't afford to let this wisp of a fop beat you."

Then we went out for a short stroll through the town before going over to the meeting place, Courtenay carrying a long black bag under his arm. But with such a serious business on our hands we soon tired of sightseeing, and, taking the ferry, crossed over to Brooklyn, going thence to the designated spot, a quiet open place near the sea and beyond the Narrows. We found no one there to meet us, and Courtenay, looking at his watch, informed us that we were at least three quarters of an hour ahead of time. At his suggestion we walked on a bit.

Passing through some trees, we saw two large ships anchored near the shore. They were war ships, for the muzzles of guns in tiers looked at us. Over both floated the British flag. A small schooner, a trading vessel which flew the American colors, was anchored between them, and a boat containing men in the British uniform was passing from her to the smaller of the two war ships.

"What ships are those?" asked Mercer of a farmer who was leaning against a tree looking at the frigates.

"Don't you know?" he replied. "I thought everybody knew those two ships."

"We are strangers here," said Mercer.

"The ship farthest out," said the farmer, "is the British fifty-gun frigate *Leander*, and the other is the British thirty-eight-gun frigate *Guerriere*. They are here to find out where all American vessels are going, or from what place they come, and also they search them to take out of them any sailors who may be of British birth, and at the same time any American sailors that they want. I've seen them with as many as half a dozen of our ships at once halted under their guns to be searched. See, they've been going through that schooner now, and I guess they've taken a man out of her, for there's one in the boat that has no uniform on."

They ascended the deck of the *Guerriere*, and we could see plainly that the man who wore no uniform was a prisoner, probably an American, for the New England men were fine sailors, better than the English, and the British captains took them wherever they could.

We had been hearing for years of these things, but we never thought we should witness such an immeasurable disgrace. History tells us that there were thousands of such instances, and here were the frigates on watch at the entrance to our most important port, as they had been for months and years, searching our ships and carrying off our men with perfect impunity, almost in sight of the city of New York, and that too with all the circumstances of arrogance and insult. Can you wonder that so many of us hated the English then?

I noticed the *Guerriere* carefully. Of all the English ships on our coast this had won the most evil fame, and was the best hated. She was the most active in overhauling our vessels and in kidnapping our sailors, and it was her captain who would enter the name of his ship as

a kind of defiance upon the log books of the vessels which she had searched; and it was the same Guerriere that caused her name to be printed in immense letters extending the full length of her fore-topsail, that the American captains might see it from afar and tremble.

So it was no wonder that I watched with interest a ship which not only delighted to inflict outrage upon Americans, but to insult them also. She was a fine frigate, that the English had taken from the French and fitted up in perfect style. Her prow, of white and gold, was turned slightly toward us, and her carved figurehead rose and fell with the gentle lap of the water.

"And that's the Guerriere?" I said to the farmer.

"That's the Guerriere," he replied, "and her men have boasted a thousand times in that city over there that they can sink any American ship that floats."

I will confess that I was afraid the boast was true. You must understand the reputation that the English navy then held throughout the world. In all the naval wars and innumerable sea combats with France, Spain, Denmark, and Holland, since the middle of the preceding century, she had been uniformly victorious. In scores of sea fights with these antagonists, ship for ship, she had lost but five or six frigates, and she had captured enough from them or sunk enough of theirs to make a huge navy. She had destroyed the fleet of Napoleon in Aboukir Bay, and again had crushed the combined fleets of France and Spain at Trafalgar—an event that was still fresh in the memory of us all. A British thirty-eight-gun frigate was always good enough for a French fifty, and never hesitated to attack a Spaniard of twice her size, and would whip her too. All of us remembered Nelson's reply to the Spanish admiral who, captured by him, asked him to say in his report that he had fought well. "Yes," replied the great English sea fighter, "you fought very well for a Spaniard." Now the English

swept the sea with a thousand ships of war, and were mistress of it everywhere. They felt their victories and their pride too, and never hesitated to show it. Only the officers and sailors of our own little navy, twenty ships all told, the biggest a forty-four, maintained that they could meet the British and beat them too, ship for ship, gun for gun, and man for man. But we landsmen, Americans even, did not believe them. Such was then the glory of the British navy, and the fear that it inspired, allied as courage and superior skill seemed to be with overwhelming members.

The kidnapped sailor was taken upon the deck of the *Guerriere*, and what became of him I know not. The little schooner turned her sails to the wind, and, her prow cutting the blue water, passed out to sea. It was a bright spring morning in a time of peace, official peace, and his Majesty's Government of Great Britain was continually extending its good wishes to the United States of America, and trusting that the republic would not yield to the evil influence of the despot and tyrant, Bonaparte; meanwhile a British fleet kept incessant watch at the entrance of every American port, and exercised all the power and arrogance of an overwhelming victor in war with its European neighbours.

The two ships swung placidly in the water. Their spars and masts, tapering and symmetrical in their outlines, formed a black tracery against the sky. The bright uniforms of British officers could be seen upon the decks, and we were near enough to hear now and then a word of command from the officers.

"It's the money lovers of these Eastern cities who make us stand this," said Mercer. "I'd fight first if every city we had should be burned to the ground."

"Come away," said Courtenay, "I don't want to see it any longer.

We walked back toward the spot at which we were to meet Mr. Van Steenkerk and his companions, and saw

them approaching, all dressed in the extreme fashion of the day and looking fresh and natty.

"Good morning," said Mr. Van Steenkerk very politely. "Have you been taking a view of the sea?"

"We have been watching your beloved British, who are engaged in the lawful and peaceful occupation of blockading this port," said Courtenay.

Van Steenkerk did not reply; I fancy that even he could not defend the scene that we had witnessed. I noticed that Knowlton also carried a black bag under his arm, though it was smaller than Courtenay's.

"Well, gentlemen, we are assembled for serious business," said Knowlton.

"Certainly," said Courtenay, "and since we are here in this quiet spot, I propose that we not only settle the preliminaries, but have the duel also this morning."

"That suits us exactly," said Knowlton. "There is no reason whatever for delay."

"Are you agreed, Mr. Ten Broeck?" asked Courtenay.

"Yes."

"And you, Mr. Van Steenkerk?" asked Knowlton.

"Yes."

I retracted some of my bad opinion of the little man. He certainly seemed to be no coward.

"Then there is nothing to do," said Courtenay, "but to produce the weapons and fight. Of course, we being the challenged have the choice of weapons."

"Of course, of course," said Knowlton; "but thinking that we might settle the whole affair while we were here, and that you would not be provided, I brought the weapons along with me, and very good ones they are too."

He opened his black bag and produced two extremely handsome small swords, exactly alike.

"Not at all," said Courtenay; "we do not choose

swords, since our man has never used one. We choose better weapons; we choose these."

He opened his own black bag and took out two heavy, long-barrelled rifles, such as we use in the West for bear or buffalo shooting and Indian fighting.

"Why, what do you mean by those?" exclaimed Knowlton.

"I mean that your Mr. Van Steenkerk and our Mr. Ten Broeck are to fight with these at ten paces," replied Courtenay, as if surprised.

"But one of our principals or both will get killed," protested Knowlton.

"We have an idea in the West and South that when two men fight a duel it is because they want to kill each other, therefore we give them a chance to do it," replied Courtenay.

Knowlton looked irresolute. Van Steenkerk had turned slightly pale, and was looking at the rifles, which were lying side by side on the grass. They were certainly weapons of a formidable appearance, heavy of stock, with a long, slender blue barrel, from which a half-ounce ball went unerringly to the chosen mark.

"At ten paces," said Knowlton in a hesitating tone. "Why, we might as well begin digging the graves for both men. It's murder."

"You don't like ten paces?" said Courtenay.

"No."

"Then make it five."

Knowlton whispered for a moment with one of his comrades.

"Such conditions are monstrous, barbaric," he said. "You can not insist upon them."

"But we do," replied Courtenay.

The report of a musket shot came from the sea, its sound doubled in the clear, calm morning.

"Is some one fighting before us?" exclaimed Mercer.

"No, that came from the boats," said Knowlton.

It was but a step through the trees, and all of us took it, eager to see the cause of the shot.

"Look," said Courtenay, who was first. "That shot came from the *Guerriere*."

A marine standing on the deck of the *Guerriere* was holding a gun in his hand, and looking intently at the surface of the water. A wisp of smoke rising from the muzzle of his musket floated upward and lost itself in the spars and riggings of the ship.

"What is that on the water?" asked Van Steenkerk.

"A man's head," replied Courtenay.

A man was swimming from the ship toward the shore, all but his head submerged. A bloody streak across the side of the head showed where the musket ball had passed. Even at the distance the face expressed agony, wildness, hope.

"A deserter!" exclaimed Mercer.

A second marine appeared on the deck of the *Guerriere*, and raising his musket fired at the swimming head. The bullet struck the surface of the sea within six inches of the head, dashing water over it, and then skipping like a pebble reached the land and battered itself against a rock not twenty feet from us. The man swam on. I felt a curious sickening sensation. I had never before seen a human head used as a target for bullets.

"Pretty poor marksmanship," said Courtenay, "and it's none of my business, but I hope the poor devil will escape."

Several more shots were fired from the *Guerriere* at the swimmer, but none touched him. Once he turned his head slightly to look back, and then seemed to swim with increased effort. I could see his face distinctly, and despair showed there. There was foam on his lips.

"That man must have good reason for seeking to escape," I said.

A boat was swung from the side of the *Guerriere*, and

oarsmen and marines leaped into it. A young officer in bright uniform took command. Under the strong arms of the rowers, the boat sped over the water toward the weakening swimmer.

The fugitive was splashing water, as his strokes grew wilder. I felt the fear of death for him, but the men in the boat did not fire, as they seemed to be sure now of taking the swimmer alive.

"I never saw that man before," said Courtenay, "but I'd be willing to help him escape if I could."

The fugitive reached shallow water and ran ashore. Not far away stretched the woods, tempting shelter to a hunted man. But he did not go there. Instead, he ran to us.

"Save me, friends; for the love of God, save me from that ship!" he cried.

He was a young man of good natural frame, but wasted. His clothes seemed to hang upon bones only. I had never before heard a man beg for mercy, and the thrill was painful.

"We can do nothing for a British deserter," I said, "but run for the woods, and maybe you can escape."

"I can go no farther," he said; "my strength is gone. I am not an Englishman, but an American like you. Help me! Will you let me be taken back to that ship and the torture of the cat?"

His face was full of appeal.

"He speaks the truth," cried Courtenay; "this man is no Englishman, but an American—one of us. Listen how he drops his r's and softens his vowels. No Englishman ever spoke with that accent. It belongs to us Southerners. What are you, man?"

"A Marylander," replied the seaman. "I was impressed from the Sally Jones more than seven years ago."

Then he begged us again to help him. He looked at us with increasing appeal in his eyes, and his face was that of one who had suffered.

Courtenay was excited—much excited. All his hot South Carolina blood flamed up.

"Comrades," he cried, "we would be disgraced forever if we let them take this man back. Will you not help me to defend him?"

"I will, for one," I said, unable to resist such an appeal, "but we are not properly armed."

"You forget the rifles," said Courtenay.

They were still lying on the ground side by side, and he snatched them up, handing one to me and keeping the other himself. The men in the boat were landing. I heard footsteps beside me, and a voice said:

"Please consider me your friend and ally in this."

I looked around and saw that little woman-man, that little whipper-snapper, Van Steenkerk, by my side. He held one of the rapiers in his hand, ready for a thrust. He looked ridiculous with his puny figure in his exaggerated clothes, but I recognised the brave man nevertheless.

Knowlton held the other sword, and Mercer had drawn a pistol from somewhere in the interior of his coat. The man stood behind us, panting alike with exhaustion and excitement.

Six men, a lieutenant at their head, landed from the boat and advanced toward us, arms in their hands. I noticed the lieutenant closely. He was a young man, almost as young as myself. They approached us, and stopped in stiff, military fashion at ten feet.

"We wish to take that man behind you," said the lieutenant; "he is a deserter from his Majesty's ship *Guerriere*, which you see there."

I suppose that he spoke to me, because I was the biggest. He looked suspiciously at us. There was enough to arouse his suspicions, as at least five of us showed arms.

"I do not see what claim you can have upon an American sailor," I said.

"What do you mean?"

"This man is an American sailor, impressed by your countrymen more than seven years ago."

"I know nothing of that," he replied with a shrug of his shoulders. "I have been on the *Guerriere* but a year, and I found him there when I came. He is rated as a British seaman. He must go back with us."

The sailor said not a word, as if his tale once told, he trusted implicitly in its effect upon us.

"This man is an American, born and bred; I know it; I know his father," I said.

An idea had seized me. He had told us that he used to live on the Baltimore road, and I suddenly remembered the tale of the old blacksmith.

"Is not your name Patterson?" I asked of the man behind us.

"Yes, Patterson—Henry Patterson."

"Does not your father live on the Baltimore road?"

"Yes, he is a blacksmith there; he was seven years ago."

"You hear," I said to the lieutenant. "This man is an American. I know it."

"I care nothing about that," he said; "such things are for the captain of the *Guerriere* or the Admiralty. At any rate, this man is a liar."

"He is not a liar," I said; "he tells the truth, and I know it."

"It is the truth, the gospel truth," said the sailor.

"Come," said the lieutenant, "I have no time to waste here in debate. I must carry this deserter back to our ship."

"You shall not do it, sir," cried Mr. Van Steenkerk, jumping about like a turkey cock and flourishing his little sword in a manner that was dangerous to me, his nearest neighbour. "Damn me, if you shall do it, sir. Listen to me: I love England, and I have long wanted to be an Englishman until this day, but I don't want to

be one now. I came here to fight this gentleman on my left, but I will take great pleasure in fighting you instead. Draw your sword."

I made a vow that very moment to ask the little dandy his pardon for anything offensive that I had ever said to him, be the greater fault mine or his.

"I have six men armed," said the lieutenant, "and I say this deserting British sailor shall go with us."

"I have seven men, at least five of whom are armed," I said, "and this American sailor shall not go with you. He is on his own soil, and here he shall stay."

The lieutenant looked at me, and I looked at him. I could see that he was at a loss. Had we been on the deck of the *Guerriere* the advantage would have been his, but now, on our own ground, it was ours.

"We do not wish bloodshed," said the lieutenant.

"Neither do we," said I. Then I added: "We shall certainly resist with arms any attempt to take this man."

There was no doubt about our attitude, and the look of irresolution appeared again upon his face.

"I shall complain to your Government about this," he said.

It was an acknowledgment of defeat.

"Do so," I said. I knew what complaints to governments amounted to in those days.

He looked at his ship. They seemed to be making some kind of a signal there.

"Your name, please?" he said to me.

"It is wholly unnecessary."

He paused again, then he added:

"But we shall have him back again."

"Good-bye."

He marched his men to the boat, and they rowed toward the ship. The sailor began to thank us so profusely that we stopped him.

"Come," I said, "I think you'll be a safer man out of sight of that ship."

We walked swiftly, not stopping until we were deep in the thick woods behind the little town of Brooklyn, and the spars and masts of the *Guerriere* and her consort were far out of sight. We took the rescued sailor with us, Courtenay holding him by the arm, while Van Steenkerk, still brandishing his sword, went on before. But when we stopped and Courtenay released his hold, the man sank down in a lump upon the ground, overpowered by his efforts.

"Give him some of this," said Van Steenkerk; "I thought that I might need it myself, and it is timely."

He handed out a small flask, and Courtenay poured some of the strong liquor into his mouth. He gasped and gurgled, and a little colour appeared in his face.

Van Steenkerk poured another gulp of the hot stuff down his throat, and the man revived and sat up.

His strength steadily increased, and his spirit with it. His rescue seemed to create him anew. By and by he told us of himself, how he had been taken out of the schooner by a ship of the line, and they only laughed at him when he said he was not an Englishman. They didn't care whether he was or not, and anyhow he was rated as an able-bodied English seaman on board that ship of the line. When he refused to serve they used the cat, and then they used the cat again. On the same ship he had fought in the great battle of Trafalgar, and he did not mind it so much then, in the fury and blaze of the conflict, but when he was doing guard duty in the German Ocean and the North Sea he tried to escape, and was caught, and given to the lash again. A second time he sought to get away, and found only the cat. He was passed from one ship to another and was flogged in each, until he lost the spirit of a man, and was willing to be anything that they said. But when he was sent on to the *Guerriere* and she came to the American station, he took the first chance to escape, desperate though it was. Such was his story, and many another man had the like to tell.

"We don't know what will be said about this," said Courtenay. "We must smuggle him into town somewhere, and then to his home. After that the American and British Governments can settle it between them, if any question is raised."

Van Steenkerk had put up his sword, and was standing near. I went up to him.

"Mr. Van Steenkerk," I said, "you and I came out here to fight a duel."

"Is that so? I have no recollection of it," he replied.

"I'm afraid it's true," I said.

"Then if you insist upon it, it is true, and the duel has been fought," he replied with a faint gleam in his eye.

"Which of us is dead?" I asked.

"That is the question," he replied.

"Mr. Van Steenkerk," I said, "I was mistaken in you; you are a brave and true man."

"If I have said anything that was offensive to you, Mr. Ten Broeck, I take it back and apologize."

"Then let us shake hands and be friends."

We shook hands with the best good will. Yet I was careful about my grip, my hand was so much larger and stronger than his.

"But I'm afraid I've disgraced myself by taking this man's part," he said ruefully.

"You obeyed your best impulse, that was what you did," said Mercer, who heard him. It had been a long time since I had seen this dry Tennessean so moved.

Then we went back to the city, taking the rescued sailor with us. We concealed him that night, and Van Steenkerk put him on the road home the next morning.

"I think we came out of that double affair very well," said Courtenay that night.

"I think so too," I said; "but I'm glad the duel with those rifles at ten paces didn't come off."

"I never thought it would," he replied.

CHAPTER XIII.

AN ARRIVAL FROM THE SOUTH.

THE next morning Courtenay and I made our finest toilets and proposed to take a saunter about the Battery, where we might breathe the fresh salt air and see whomsoever might come in our way. Mercer declined to go with us, saying that he had business to which he must attend at once, and promised to meet us at the tavern when we returned at noon for dinner.

Though it was not precisely the time of day for the fashion of New York, there were some people of consequence, nevertheless, strolling about the fine little park that they call the Battery, though I understand now that the fashionable portion of New York is moving farther uptown toward Canal Street.

We were delighted to meet Van Steenkerk among those who were parading. He was dressed, if such a thing were possible, more gorgeously than ever, and we felt somewhat overpowered in his company. But he really knew people, and introduced us to several of consequence. We met the famous Dr. David Hosack, a fine-looking man of thirty-five, Colonel Nicholas Fish, a candidate for lieutenant governor against De Witt Clinton, and then the greatest of them all, the renowned Mr. Washington Irving, whose history of New York I have read five times with the greatest delight. He had a fine face, was dressed in good style, wearing a heavy overcoat with a great fur collar over his other clothing, the morning being cool. He talked to us several minutes, and

asked us numerous questions about Kentucky and Tennessee, which he said he intended to visit some day.

When we returned to the tavern we found Mercer there, as he had promised he would be.

"You can't guess who has come, Phil," he said.

"I shall not try, for I have not the slightest idea."

"Cyrus Pendleton and his daughter and a young gentleman whom you know."

"Bidwell, of course."

"Yes, Bidwell, of course," he laughed, though the laugh did not seem wholly real to me. Then he added that they were at our tavern and we should see them at dinner. I was not surprised, as Cyrus Pendleton travelled often and far on business, and I was not astonished either that Bidwell should be in their train, as he seemed to have nothing to do nowadays but to follow them wherever they might go.

This was a great and pleasant event to me, as I had not believed that I would see Marian Pendleton again in many days, and my heart began to beat a more lively tune than its wont.

Cyrus Pendleton received me in his usual constrained manner, Bidwell shook my hand in a way that he would make supercilious, but I could see shining in Marian's eyes a warmth of welcome that atoned for all coldness in others. They had arrived late the night before, after an easy journey, and Cyrus Pendleton and his daughter were fresh and ready—the father for his business and the daughter to see the great town of New York. Mr. Pendleton turned his talk at once to war, and he was as hot as ever for it. I saw that he would be considered a firebrand by the merchants and shippers and money lenders of New York, who were almost solidly opposed to a conflict with either Great Britain or France, preferring that the nation should endure any sort of disgrace and any amount of suffering, as long as it was confined to obscure individuals, sailors, and such, rather

than suffer a diminution of their profits or a loss of the wealth they had gained already. But the tone of the fur trader's talk pleased us all, myself included, despite my knowledge of the Government's difficulties, and none had any desire to interfere with it. Seizing the opportunity, I asked Marian to take a ride with me that afternoon, and let me show her a little of New York, to which proposition she consented with alacrity, though there was a frown on her father's face.

"I had fancied that I would have the pleasure of introducing New York to Miss Pendleton," said Bidwell, a little irritation showing in his tone. But his annoyance was of no profit to him, since I was very far from asking him to go with us.

I hired two good horses and Marian and I rode northward. In truth, one can ride in no other direction in New York, unless he wishes to ride into the sea, the island is so narrow and peculiar in shape. Marian was a fine horsewoman, as is every one in Kentucky, alike from choice and necessity. We had a crisp, fresh afternoon for our ride, the sunshine being bright and the day having turned somewhat warmer, removing the need of wraps.

As we rode northward, I called to her notice the signs of great activity prevailing everywhere, the vast amount of excavation and building going on, and the rapid growth of the place. It is a fact that 1811 was a very notable year for building in New York, the people realizing that theirs was destined to be the greatest city in America, and being incited to extensive effort by it. We were well beyond Canal Street before we ceased to hear the incessant scrape and shriek of the saw, the beat of the hammer, and the sharp ring of the mason's trowel. On all sides of us we saw men cutting down hills and filling up marshes, that both might be sites for houses, as if they were bound to build a new Babylon before the year was out. But I was glad when we passed all this

and entered the domain of grass and trees and country houses, some portions of the island seeming almost as wild as the hills of our own Kentucky. It was a perfect afternoon, a soft breeze which told of the northward march of spring blowing from the southwest upon us. Through the trees, for we kept to the western side of the island, we could see the silver-gray Hudson, its surface crinkling up like melted glass under the gentle breeze, and now and then showing faint tints of purple and green and blue and red. The masts and spars of the ships in the river were wonderfully near and distinct in the clear air, and, farther on, the Palisades stretched their mighty bastion of rock mile after mile, the sunlight seeking the crannies and touching the foliage which clung to their sides with its gleam of gold.

My mind had been filled for so many days with thoughts of war and danger, rescue and revenge, that the sudden peace, the calmness and beauty of Nature and the presence of a fair woman acted upon me like some powerful potion and gave me visions of another and softer kind. Under their influence I was quiet for a while, and Marian, too, seemed to have no wish to talk. But I took enough glances to see that the spring roses were blooming brightly in her cheeks. Her eyes were turned usually toward the river and the hills and the Palisades beyond, and they sparkled with the light of youth and beauty, strength and happiness. She and I were merely like the rest of Nature, feeling the reawakening of the earth after the winter cold and snow.

"It is very beautiful here," she said.

"Our own Kentucky is beautiful, too," I replied, "but this is different. That huge rock wall yonder does not remind me much of our gently rolling blue grass."

"But I suppose that they are doing the same there that they are doing here," she said, "talking and thinking of nothing but war and its chances."

"They are probably talking much more in favour of

it there than they are here," I said. Then I proceeded to urge with great warmth the necessity of preparing for war, and drew comparisons between the spirit of the Kentuckians and the New Yorkers, not at all in favour of the latter. Perhaps I was a little unjust to the New Yorkers, for Kentucky would not be exposed to invasion unless in case of overwhelming defeat, while New York would be in danger at the outset. Nevertheless, I argued that every consideration of honour and safety alike demanded that we fight, an opinion which I yet hold.

"Do you still intend to go to the war, if we have one?" she asked.

"Would you think better of me if I were to go or if I were to stay at home?" I asked.

She laughed, a laugh that was clear and gay in the beginning, and soft and sad at the end.

"The decision is not in my hands," she said.

I quoted in half-jesting tones:

I could not love thee, dear, so much,
Loved I not honour more.

She did not answer.

We rode on in the growing spring, noting the tender young grass springing up over the dead blades of last year, the swelling buds on the trees, the deepening tints of green in the foliage on the far cliffs, and the faint odour of spice and rose that comes with the south winds that freshen the earth in spring. Dark was approaching when we rode back into the town and saw the lights gleaming before us.

Courtenay, Mercer, and I called that evening upon the Misses Constance and Fanny Eastlake, whom we had known well in Washington, and the next morning all of us received invitations to a large entertainment two evenings later at the home of John Haslett, a rich merchant, who had a fine house on Canal Street. Mr. Haslett was

a business and social acquaintance of Mr. Pendleton's, and the reception was to be in honour of the Western man and his daughter.

Naturally all of us looked forward to it with anticipation, and neglected nothing that would contribute to our best appearance when the time should come. We three had ordered new clothes immediately upon our arrival in New York, and to our great joy they were ready in time. So when the hour came to go we were all in our best. I wore a gray coat with a slight pearl tint, a long waistcoat of white flowered satin, and coloured small clothes. That fashion has passed now, and even then was about to change, but it had certain advantages in favour of picturesqueness. Courtenay and Mercer were in raiment as splendid, and we set off in high spirits to the Haslett house, where we found a great company assembled.

In Louisville and Lexington at that time the talk when people met in the evenings was sure to be political; in Washington also it was political, with just a slight touch of literature, for little John Agg had been writing his bright verses of society at the capital, and there were others with as great pretensions and less skill; in Baltimore the talk of books and such things grew slightly, and the fashions became conspicuous, although politics still absorbed the greater share of attention. But in Philadelphia and here, even under the strain of expected war, people talked readily of other things than politics, passing from one to another of all the many great interests of the world. I judged that in New York, in ordinary times, political subjects would receive scant attention, though with us of the West they yet largely occupy men's minds.

Nevertheless, the expected war was bound to have a considerable show of attention, and we soon discovered that the sentiment of New York, at least among the class represented at Mr. Haslett's house, was largely against it,

for wealth loves to take no risks. In such an atmosphere even the red-hot zeal of Cyrus Pendleton was chilled, and he said little on the subject. Many people of distinction, politically, socially, or otherwise, were present, and I was lucky enough to meet Mr. Irving again. He talked about the proposed war, bringing up the subject himself, and while he could not deny the truth of my argument that the war would be just, so far as we were concerned, yet he viewed its imminence with the greatest pain, having more respect and liking for the English than I had.

He said that the English in their home life in their own country had many estimable qualities, and Americans, the majority of whom had seen only their bad side, would like them better some day. He showed much enthusiasm when speaking of the beauties of the English country and of the literary and artistic life of the Old World, so rich in its history and memorable associations. He told of the military might and valour of England, and described his own thrilling experience, the sights that he saw, and the sounds that he heard when he was in a theatre one London evening and the news of the great victory at Trafalgar and Nelson's glorious death came to the audience there.

I confessed that all these things might be true, but since a nation persisted in showing to us its worst side, it was that worst side with which we would have to deal.

A little later, as I passed into a second room, I met Major Gilbert Northcote, my cousin, dressed with the greatest care, and as easy of manner as ever.

"You here?" I exclaimed in surprise.

"Yes, I am here," he said in his old ironical tone; "and since we seem to have business in the same towns and with the same people we should prepare for many meetings."

This was true, and I acknowledged it.

"I should like to remind you of another thing," he added. "In Washington I was alone, so to speak, but if

you will investigate you will find that I have more friends present than you. You will discover that in this large town, where they are compelled to know things, they are not so eager for war with the greatest power in the world as they are down in the raw little village in the woods that you call the capital of your so-called republic."

"It may be so," I said—I was afraid that it was—"but I should advise you not to use such language about our capital and country even among your American friends."

He thanked me in the same ironical tone for my good advice, bowed, and passed on. One surprise is often merely the precedent for a second, and I had not gone five steps before I met face to face with another man whom I had not expected to see there. He was tall and young, and the British uniform, always noted for its bright colours, blazed upon him. The uniform was that of a lieutenant in the navy, and it was my lieutenant of the *Guerriere*, the officer from whom we had saved the American sailor.

"Good evening," he said, quite calmly and collectedly.

"Good evening," I said, adopting his tone and manner, which seemed to me to be suited to the occasion; "since our second meeting is more formal than the first, I think we had better exchange names. I am Philip Ten Broeck, of Kentucky, late a clerk in the office of the Secretary of the Treasury at Washington, at present travelling for pleasure, information, and amusement."

"I trust that you are finding all three, Mr. Ten Broeck," he said politely; "I am Henry Arthur Allyn, of Derbyshire, England, third lieutenant aboard his Majesty's thirty-eight-gun frigate *Guerriere*, now cruising at the entrance to New York harbour for the glory and benefit of his Majesty and his realm of England."

"I can not say that I wish the *Guerriere* success in such efforts, at least in these waters," I said.

"She is a fine frigate," he replied, a faint tinge of boasting appearing in his tone, "and is sure to do what she is sent to do."

"She might meet one of ours some day," I said.

He laughed. It was no longer the slight tinge of boasting that appeared in his tone. It was incredulity, derision broadly manifest.

"The *Guerriere* would find no trouble in sinking any American ship that floats to the bottom of the sea," he said. "Pardon me for plain speaking, but everybody knows it; you Yankees know it. The British navy has crushed all the navies of Europe; odds have amounted to nothing."

"And yet," I said, "away back in the Revolution, when we were mere colonies, there was the *Bon Homme Richard* and the *Serapis*, the *Hyder Ally* and the *General Monk*, the *Ranger* and the *Drake*, and other cases where the American ships did not fare the worse, though the odds were not in their favour at the beginning."

"Isolated instances, mere exceptions," he said. "Why, even now, in a time of peace, no American ship dare go five miles from your ports without the consent of Great Britain."

It was true, though it was due to the supineness of our rulers, and not to a lack of spirit among the people. There was no reply to his taunt, and, moreover, our talk had begun to look like a boasting match, so I sought to change the subject, but he returned to it at least in part.

"Perhaps you are surprised," he said, "that we have not made any complaint about the kidnapping of our sailor, but we do not care to make the affair public; we would rather remain quiet, as we are sure to have ample opportunities for revenge."

He was a fine example of frank brutality, and Courtenay and Mercer strolling that way, I presented them to him. In a few minutes we passed on, and when I saw him a few minutes later he was talking to some ladies,

and his British uniform seemed to bring him no unpopularity. Nor was he the only British officer from the ships present. I soon learned that conspicuous members of the peace party in New York often entertained them, and I was secretly ashamed of it, though I saw that it was no place in which to tell my real feelings.

The two Misses Eastlake were present, and in the course of the evening I saw the elder, Constance, and Marian together. They formed a striking contrast, Marian with her dark hair and eyes and her extremely fair soft complexion, which is the most noted characteristic of Kentucky beauty, while Miss Eastlake was a perfect blonde. I obtained the opportunity to spend a short time with each, but presently I saw that Courtenay had taken possession of Miss Eastlake, while Bidwell and Van Steenkerk, who had met and who seemed to be kindred spirits, were dangling after Marian. The evening was then far advanced, and as the rooms were crowded the air felt close and warm. Finding a convenient door, I stepped outside in search of temporary relief in a purer atmosphere.

It was a side door of the house through which I had passed, and I found myself standing in a narrow little alley. The night had turned dark, and the alley, with the tall houses rising on either side, was just a streak of blackness. But the air, blown through the slit by the wind, was fresh and cool, and I stood there taking it into my lungs in great gulps and enjoying it as if it were rare wine.

The alley created a kind of draught for the air, and as the wind rushed by, crowded up between the high walls, it made a moaning as if crying out for more room. I was startled by the contrast, the abrupt passage from the brilliant, lighted rooms, crowded with people in rich dress, to this narrow, pitchy black little alley, silent save for the groaning of the wind as it passed. Not a sound came from the house which I had just left, not a ray of

light. If there were any windows on that side they were closed with heavy shutters.

I looked up at the sky, and it was like gazing from the bottom of a well. There was just a patch of light far above me, which dwindled into nothing before it reached the depths of the well. The walls assumed fantastic shapes in the three-quarter darkness, and the continuous groaning of the wind through the cleft aided my fancy and turned one shape into another.

Presently my eyes, distending in the darkness, saw a gleam of red farther down the alley toward the street. I approached and found that the red was the colour of a uniform, and going yet a little nearer I saw that the wearer of the uniform was my new acquaintance, Lieutenant Henry Arthur Allyn, of his Britannic Majesty's thirty-eight-gun frigate *Guerriere*. I presumed that he, too, finding the door, had come out in search of fresh air, but having no wish to continue the acquaintance I withdrew farther up the alley toward the rear of the house. I stopped at the corner, where another small alley, passing in the rear of the building, cut in a right angle across the one in which I stood. It was an improvement, as the air coming in two directions was still fresher and purer than it was in my first position. As I stood there, eyes gaining strength in the darkness, I could yet see the red gleam of the uniform, though the outlines of its wearer were lost.

I did not care to speak to Allyn again. I feared that we might be disagreeable to each other, and it was not the thing to quarrel at a reception purely social. Having this fear in mind I stayed where I was and waited for him to go in first. But he made no movement, being apparently as fond of the fresh air as I was, and since I was in no hurry I continued to wait.

The wind moaned up one alley and shrieked down the other, and the two currents meeting where I stood mingled into something that had the suggestion of a cry in

it, as if a human being were in agony. I heard a faint crushing noise, as of a body falling softly. My blood quivered, though I said it was nothing. I heard the soft, complaining noise again, and still knowing that it was nothing pressed my body back against the cold brick wall. Something slid by me, my blood quivering again when it touched me, though I was not noticed, for the figure passed on down the alley toward the red gleam.

What a fool I was! there is nothing supernatural in this world, not even on a dark night in a narrow alley that is like the bottom of a well. I could now see that the man who had passed me with such scant ceremony, for a man it certainly was, bent over somewhat and stepping lightly, but obviously a human figure to eyes that were seeing more the longer they remained in the darkness.

The man's left hand hung limply by his side, while his right was held stiffly in front of him. A ray of light fell across the right hand and flashed, as it slid off the edge of a knife. It came upon me with suddenness and conviction that this man, slipping out of the dark, was there for murder. But upon whom and for what? The quiver came again in my blood, and became a shudder. The man advanced toward the red gleam, swiftly and with soundless tread. The wind moaned up one alley and shrieked down the other, and I stood there like a great fool, watching the whole thing and doing nothing else.

The man stopped, and, leaning against the wall as if he would plan further before he struck, turned his face slightly upward. A few beams from the top of the cleft fell upon it and showed it to me. The face was gaunt, scarred, and wild, and I knew it. That glimpse recalled me to myself and to a sense of my duty.

I took three long steps, as soundless as his own, and my right hand fell upon the wrist of the hand that held

the knife. It was a thin, wasted wrist, and my fingers closed around it and held it as tightly as if it were that of a child. A cry rose to his lips, but my other hand fell over his mouth and shut it off.

"Come back into this other alley, where no one can see us," I said in a hasty whisper. "Nobody shall harm you. I'm your friend."

He yielded weakly, going back with me without resistance and without complaint. I took my hand from his mouth and the knife from his other hand, but I kept a firm grip on his shoulder. I cast one look back at the red gleam and it was still there, the wearer of the brilliant uniform seeing and hearing nothing.

We walked down the cross alley where the light was brighter. It shone now directly upon my companion's face, showing every seam and line, and meeting the look of his excited eyes. His whole expression was that of a frightened, crushed man. I think that if I had pressed my hand upon him he would have dropped to the earth, such was the revulsion of feeling in him, his shame in being caught in such an act, and perhaps a feeling of apprehension too.

"Patterson," I said, "I know why you were about to murder that officer."

"It's true," he said; "he had flogged me more than once aboard the ship, and he was the worst of them all. But I would not try to do it again. You came just in time. God forgive me!"

He put his hands over his face.

"I am not going to give you up," I said, "or tell about you. There's a better way of revenge than the secret blade. I have your knife in my pocket now. Promise me that you will not get another."

He said he would not.

"Go back to your father's house," I said. "Get back your strength, for soon there will be war between England and us. Then, with your place at your gun,

you can seek revenge, but never in this way. Do you promise?"

He bowed his head, and as I took my hand off his shoulder he slid away in the darkness, his footfalls making a soft crushing noise and then ceasing as the dark blur of his figure disappeared.

I returned to the first alley. The red gleam was gone, and having enough of the fresh air and the outside of the house I opened the door and entered again. A half hour later I passed Lieutenant Allyn and he nodded to me. But I did not tell him that I had saved his life. It was a secret that I intended to keep.

In another half hour the people were going home. Courtenay, Mercer, and I paid our respects to our hosts, bade the others whom we knew good night, and walked back through the streets toward our tavern. Each of us had a bed in the same room, and we cast off our clothes in a hurry, as it was late and we wanted sleep. I threw my coat over a chair, and Courtenay pushed it a little to one side to make room for his also.

"Hey, what is that?" he exclaimed.

"What is what?" I asked sleepily.

"This that I have found in your pocket?" he replied, holding up a knife, more like a dagger, with a long, keen double edge.

"That," I said, "is a memento of New York which was presented to me to-night."

In two minutes we three were sound asleep.

CHAPTER XIV.

IN THE ENEMY'S CAMP.

I FELT that it was time to leave New York for Boston, as I had been instructed not to linger in any city, at least on the Northern journey, and though there were several things tempting me to stay longer in New York, which I liked, I arranged to depart on the second morning after the reception to the Pendletons. Courtenay and Mercer adjusted their affairs that they might go with me, for in such troubled times, in the divided state of the country, with plotters hovering about, we saw the need of good strong arms and loyal hearts, which each of us was confident that the others had.

I said good-bye to Marian, and again I was tempted to speak to her words which I believed might not be unwelcome in other times, but the command of self came to my aid and they were unsaid.

Not caring to risk the long trip by schooner, with its doubts and delays and currents and calms, we adhered to our regular plan of travel from Washington, and bought seats on the stagecoach for Boston. These coaches were of lighter make and build than those on which we had come up from the South, and one left New York every alternate morning, Sunday omitted, for Boston, as many running in the opposite direction.

It was with the deepest interest that we entered the New England country, the fame of which has spread throughout the world because of the very strong and peculiar characteristics of its people, their industry, their

thrift, their religion, and the wonderful divergence sometimes existing between its preaching and its practice, said to be greater there than anywhere else on the globe; their singular inventive genius, which was already changing the mechanical world, practically unchanged before for thousands of years; and the high esteem in which they held literary pursuits and men of letters, most of us of the West being a little afraid of the latter.

After rejoicing in the sunshine and the fresh winds we looked about at our company of fellow-travellers. As we soon discovered, they were chiefly New Englanders returning home, and not New Yorkers going to New England. They were mostly a sad, sober lot in looks, but quite willing to talk and to talk about many things. They gave us much fatherly advice, which we took in a childlike spirit, when they learned that we were from the South and West, suggesting that we abandon our wild, irreverent ways and barbaric modes of thought and imitate the good fathers of New England in all things, thus finding a spiritual and worldly prosperity, they themselves neglecting neither kind. We promised.

We were well into the Connecticut country when we took on a woman passenger for New Haven, at which town our coach intended to stop for the night. She was a strapping big woman, at least sixty-five years old, with the face of a grenadier, barring the whiskers and mustache, and a figure of great strength and activity. Her complexion was very red and was rimmed around by white hair. Her long, vigorous stride, as she approached the coach, and the ease with which she climbed into it increased her martial appearance. She took the seat beside me, which was the only one then vacant, but remained silent, taking no notice of the talk and staring straight ahead like those who are busy with their own thoughts and see nothing.

The conversation was naturally of the expected war and its probable consequences. One could not escape the

talk of war in those days, if not about a war of our own then about some one else's, for nearly all the world was fighting—the shadow of the twin evils, Bonaparte and England, being over everything.

In New York we had some friends who were willing to share with us the dangers of war for the sake of honour and an independent national existence, but here we had none; the New Englanders, who had brought on the Revolutionary struggle, who had proven themselves so stern and enduring in the conflict, who hardly knew what it was, farmers though they were, to be beaten in the open field by the best regulars of Europe, had now turned to sheep, and the potion which had caused the evil transformation was money. The New Englanders had a great trade and commerce spread throughout the world; they were the best, the most daring, and the most enterprising of all sailors, and with that strange commingling of the New England nature, as I have seen it, which loves God and loves money in about equal parts, they were prepared to endure any dishonour rather than imperil the commerce which was enriching them so fast. I like the dollar, and I know its value. I do not think it should be despised, and a pretence that it is despised is usually an affectation or evidence of an unsound mind; but I believe that a nation should be ready to make a sacrifice even of its prosperity for the sake of what is right and just.

But we three, though we talked our best, were no match for our New Englanders, who had the advantage of age and numbers and could quote innumerable doctrines for which we had no reply, though as sure as ever that we were right. Thus we wrangled for a long time.

“Sir,” said one elder at length with great emphasis, “the men of New England will never be led into any such wild and ruinous measure as this proposed war.”

"Did you say the men of New England?" asked the old woman beside me.

They were the first words that she had spoken, and her voice was deep and harsh like a man's. Her accent was on the word "men."

"Certainly, madame," replied the elder politely.

"Where are they?"

"Where are they? I do not understand you?"

"Where are the men of New England of whom you speak? I live in New England and I have not seen one of them for a long time; I have not heard one of them speak. We used to have plenty of them thirty or forty years ago, but they have all emigrated to the West and South, and now we have left only children and old women like myself and you, sir."

A heavy and solemn silence fell upon us. I could have embraced that woman then and there. Remember that she was old enough to be my mother, almost my grandmother. Still I did not dare:

"Madame," said the elder after a while, and timidly, "your remark was violent."

"A woman might think so," she replied.

"But peaceful people are opposed to war."

"They were not in '76."

The elder again relapsed into silence. The martial lady imitated his example and did not speak again until we reached New Haven, where she left the coach with a curt adieu, followed, however, by the deep respect of us three.

On the evening of the third day we approached Boston, famous for valour, piety, and good business, all three of us looking about with the deepest interest, as the glorious memories of the Revolution clustered thickly there, and no city, not even New York or Philadelphia, had a larger place in our minds than Boston. We alighted at the Sun Tavern, which you may know is in Faneuil Square, near Faneuil Hall of patriotic fame, and slept soundly in

an atmosphere which seemed to be composed of the same elements as that of the other cities we had visited. Yet we felt the next morning that, despite ourselves, a certain primness had left upon us a mark sufficient to be noticed by each of the others, and sufficient, too, to make us feel a trifle constrained, as if we had put on new clothes that did not fit us.

Breakfast finished, we followed our custom of seeing the sights of a town as soon as we could after our arrival, and walked about the streets of Boston with the greatest diligence, as there was much to see. We visited all the cradles of liberty—that is, the places where independence was born—and were surprised to find that they were so numerous. We saw Faneuil Hall, the Old South Church, the Old North Church, the queer old Feather Store, and the Province House, where the royal governors used to live, with the Indian on the weather vane ready to shoot his arrow, the house where the Boston tea party met, and we walked three times around the stump of the old Liberty tree, with the Liberty pole planted in the centre of it. Then, feeling as full as we could hold of patriotism and ready to whip the universe if it needed a whipping, we went off in search of our friend Mr. Jonathan Starbuck, once wild sailor boy of the *Bon Homme Richard*, now pious merchant of years and wealth. His invitation to call upon him in Boston had been given with such heartiness that we were sure he would be glad to see us, despite our knowledge that invitations to visit given far away from home are not always to be accepted in too literal a spirit. But we were not mistaken in him, for, though surrounded in his warehouse by boxes and bales to such an extent that we could see only his perspiring face projecting above them, he reached each of us his hand in turn across the barrier of merchandise, and shook ours with strength and heartiness.

“But remember one thing, lads,” he said after first

greetings, "I am a man of peace and this is a town of peace."

"Peace and trade, peace and profit," said Courtenay.

"Put it that way if you choose," said the merchant, "but remember, none of your fiery Western talk here. We feel very friendly toward England, nor do we want any quarrel with France either."

He spoke in much seriousness, and I, for one, having seen the value of silence resolved to be chary and careful in my speech.

He asked us where we were putting up, and when Mercer told him at the Sun Tavern he seemed to be pleased, and his eye twinkled as if the reply had put him in mind of something.

"Have you brought your best clothes with you?" he asked.

"We never travel without them," said Courtenay.

"You show wisdom," he replied, "and it will be convenient for you now. You are three fire eaters from the West and South; mad for war with Britain, and you wish to know something about the temper of the people of New England; there is to be a banquet at your tavern to-night, and I am to attend it. I can take you with me, and as you will hear things there that will interest and instruct you, I shall be pleased to do so if you will promise to conduct yourselves as if you had been born and bred in Boston itself."

We promised with eagerness, despite the proviso in his invitation, and my general instruction to seek other than public men, and we besought him to tell us something more about the affair, but he would not, contenting himself with saying that our time would be well spent, his eye meantime lighted up by the same twinkle which I had observed when he asked us to be of his company at the feast.

"Be sure that you put on your choicest clothes and

your best dignity, for some fine people will be there," he said as we left him.

There was nothing to fear upon that point, since we three were determined to make our best appearance in this city, in which people looked at us in the critical and chilly way, and with that intention well to the fore we hastened back to the Sun Tavern, where we devoted the remainder of the afternoon to our preparations.

Soon after supper, elderly men of fine presence and careful and costly apparel, whom we took to be people of consequence, though their names were unknown to us, began to gather at the Sun Tavern. We heard them addressed as judge and doctor, but we remained in ignorance until our friend, Mr. Starbuck, came. He was pleased with our appearance.

"You will do me credit," he said; "you certainly will—that is, if you will hold your tongues."

He was in fine attire himself, and we followed him to the great parlour of the tavern, where a long table was spread richly for the banquet and a company of at least twenty men were gathered, to many of whom we were introduced. It was not the fighting sailor of the *Bon Homme Richard* who introduced us, but the portly merchant of Boston, and as the names were called we saw that we were right when we supposed these people to be of distinction, though the distinction was not altogether of the kind that we admired or liked. We were surrounded by that body of men known as the Essex Junto, afterward the leaders in the infamous and treasonable Hartford Convention; a group learned and of extreme respectability in private life, but as untrue to their country, to public interest, and to public duty as anybody could well be, so I believed then and so I believe now, and so all the historians say. How true it is that men of learning, position, and luxury think so much of those things that they lose sight of the right when it may bring hardship with it!

“Mr. Pickering, my young friends, Mr. Ten Broeck, of Kentucky; Mr. Mercer, of Tennessee; and Mr. Courtenay, of South Carolina. They wish to know the real East, and I have brought them here that they might see it.”

We were bowing to Timothy Pickering, the great Federalist of Massachusetts, a man who considered all people of the West barbarians, and who seemed to be surprised that we wore clothes of the cut and quality of his own and comported ourselves with becoming dignity. He was nearer seventy than sixty then, with a fine face and a head clad only on the back with hair. He said, a trifle dryly, not seeking to conceal the satire in it, that he hoped we would return properly enlightened concerning the Eastern state of mind, and we could only reply to a man so much older and more distinguished than ourselves that we were sure we would be, passing on then with our patron to be presented to others. We found ourselves bowing, a moment later, to Theophilus Parsons, the Chief Justice of Massachusetts, and after him Harrison Gray Otis, the President of the State Senate; George Cabot, the financier; Theodore Sedgwick; John Lowell, both senior and junior; one of the Griswolds of Connecticut; and others whose names were known and hated by us of the West—as rank a group of Federalists as could be gathered between the four seas that rim America. I kicked Courtenay’s toe.

“We are in the enemy’s camp,” I whispered. “Be careful.”

“We need to be,” he replied.

Our presence attracted much attention and curiosity, as was natural, we being so much younger than the others and coming from a portion of the country which was then distinctly hostile to New England. They seemed to be glad that we were there, as it gave them an opportunity to instruct us, and, moreover, they could badger us a bit, neither of which they neglected to do, though they were very nice and delicate in their bestowal of such at-

tentions, compelling us to admire the fineness and polish of their manners. Courtenay had acquired something of this personal finish in his own Charleston, where there was a cultivated and literary society, though small; but we were unused to it in the West, where the manners that we valued highly were of the large, open kind, accompanied by long sentences delivered in a loud voice, and men's faces were always ruddy or seamed with much living in the open, a characteristic that they preserve to this day. But these were men of books and the study room, and their faces were thin and white, and their bodies looked lean and weak in comparison with the great, rugged beings to whom I was accustomed in the West. I don't think they learned from their books the policy that so nearly brought our country to ruin, but must have evolved it from their own desires and objection to anything that might disturb their personal comfort.

They were not at all averse to talking before us; in truth, seemed rather glad of it, wishing their opinions in all their virulence to be known afar, and thinking we would prove faithful reporters of what we heard. So we listened to much abuse of Mr. Jefferson's Republican party, which everybody in his heart knows was the National party, representing the thoughts and the just aspirations of the United States, and I was forced to reply several times as best I could to the taunting question how Mr. Madison proposed to carry on his war when he succeeded in declaring it.

"We will whip old England first, and then New England," I said at last, in some exasperation to Mr. Justice Parsons.

He laughed, as if the first were much easier than the second, and continued to badger us. We also made the original discovery among those learned men that New England alone had fought and won the Revolution, and she had permitted the Middle and Southern States to

share with her in its benefits. They seemed to have forgotten the thousands of Virginians and other Southerners who marched hundreds of miles at the first cry for aid from Massachusetts and helped to drive the British out of Boston, and the shiploads of corn that came free even from far North Carolina to feed the starving Bostonians. They had forgotten all these things, and hundreds of others like them, and remembered only that New England had fought everything and done everything, and would continue to think and to do everything; other people were superfluous; in which New England has been vastly fooled.

"It's time to be seated at table," said Mr. Pickering. "The chief guest of the evening, as you know, is detained at an earlier and somewhat similar entertainment, but we are not to wait for him."

So we sat down. I had a very fair place, near the foot of the table, hidden somewhat though by a curve of a wall, with Mr. Starbuck on one side of me and a Connecticut Griswold on the other. I had pricked up my ears at the announcement of a chief guest to come later, and, supposing it to be the Governor of the State at least, looked forward with interest to his coming.

But those men knew how to choose a dinner if not an honest political policy, and eating their good food my heart warmed toward them a little. Yet I fear that a nation is in decay when it begins to make a god of its stomach. But the Connecticut man beside me did not permit any excessive growth of sympathy on my part, since he took occasion to ask many questions about us Western people in a supercilious way, as if we were really not worth it, but he must talk about us as a matter of courtesy to me. He seemed to take the greatest offence at the manners of the West, and our lack of that polish and knowledge of small social detail which in his opinion added so much distinction to the courts of Europe and which New England hoped to imitate, humbly and afar,

it is true, but still to imitate; as if men like ours of Kentucky, who had been forced to spend half their lives axe in hand cutting down the forest, and the other half rifle in hand fighting wild beasts and wilder Indians, could become dandies and beaux or ought to become such. I replied with as much eloquence and logic as I could, and we were deep in attack and defence, thinking not much of other things, when there was a bustle near the head of the table, and Mr. Pickering, who seemed to be master of ceremonies, called out in a loud voice:

“Major Gilbert Northcote, our guest, gentlemen!”

There stood my kinsman, in his finest apparel, easy, triumphant, bowing with infinite grace to the guests who had risen to receive him. I rose with the others, half mechanically, though I supposed there was nothing else to do, and looked at him, surprised at his appearance as guest of honour in a company of Americans.

His attire, in cut and quality, was much like mine—I wore the new clothes that had been made for me in New York—but brighter in colour, and he also carried a richly chased and enamelled sword at his side, after a custom passing away. He was a large, fine man, whose manners were impressive, and he showed plainly that he felt the warmth of his reception. I remembered then Mr. Pickering’s early allusion to the guest of the evening, but I had not dreamed that it could be Major Northcote, who, if one is to speak bluntly, was a caught spy upon us, driven out of Washington, and deserving the suspicion and dislike of all honest Americans, but bearing himself now with dignity and satisfaction, as if he were the best among many patriots. I looked at Mr. Starbuck, but I felt sure that this was the result of no plan of his; very likely he would remember now the face of the British officer who had been with us on our travels, but he had not heard his name nor did he know that he was a kinsman of mine.

“Friends,” said one, “a cheer for Major Gilbert

Northcote, the gallant Englishman who has been made a martyr by those barbarians down there at Washington because he is a gentleman and a true lover of his great and glorious country."

Then they applauded him, though some of them may have thought that this was putting it rather strong, and he looked around the room, his glance falling upon me. He showed no surprise, but he seemed to threaten me for the first time. I felt sure that something unpleasant was coming. Courtenay and Mercer looked at me in amazement.

The word martyr seemed to have caught the fancy of the guests for they repeated it, and after the major had settled in his chair and some dishes and the wine had been passed, Otis asked him to tell us about it. There was no slackness on the part of my kinsman, and rising, that he might be seen and heard the better, he gave me again that swift glance of menace and began his narration, which was so far from the facts that I was astonished at his invention and his boldness in using it, and yet it was told in the most convincing manner. More than once I admired this man's power over himself, though I now saw it used for an evil purpose.

He told of his residence at Washington as a British official, the sudden and mortal prejudice the Government had taken against him because he was not its admirer, the way in which it then proceeded to spy upon him and to hound him, and at last how it had opened his private mail; made some absurd charges against him, and demanded his departure from Washington, a place that it had given him the greatest pleasure of his life to leave.

They received this faithful narration with applause and laughter—applause for him, laughter for the President and his Cabinet and the men who were true to their duty. My cousin put one hand upon the hilt of his sword, the other upon the table, and looked around as if

he would mark the different degree of applause he received from each. So looking, his eyes met mine for the third time, and he started as if it had been the first. Then he gazed at me in a cold and arrogant fashion, showing plainly that he meditated some stroke, and waving his hand for silence said:

"Friends, I told you that I was maligned and persecuted because I happened to love my own country better than the one in which I was a stranger. I have told you also of their plot to defame me, but I have not told you that the chief instrument in the plot was a young man who was more than a spy—a traitor, in fact—for he was my own blood relative."

A murmur of condemnation arose, and some said aloud, "Shame!" "What a wretch!" I waited with interest, and also, I think, with some degree of coolness to hear what further he had to say, and I saw that his plan of action was the one likely to be most effective with the men present there. He was not looking at me, but swept the table with his eye, as if he would hold them all in the utmost attention, and I was sure that not one looked away from him.

"You say 'shame' rightfully," he continued, "and you call him a wretch truly, for I can not shield him, even if he be my own cousin; but, most amazing of all, such are the swagger and insolence of this young man, he is present here to-night among you, at this table, your guest, the spy of the Washington Government upon you, your words, your actions."

They cried out to know what he meant, who was the man? He levelled his straight, accusing finger at me, as if I were some great criminal, and his red face blazed.

"There he is," he said, pointing at me in a manner that was indignant and looked most real; "Philip Ten Broeck, my cousin, who has sought to ruin me, who has exposed me to countless humiliations and mortifications, the employee of that Swiss-American, Gallatin—a spy

sent here to take back a false and malicious report of you."

Everybody looked at me, and many said things which burned in my ears, bringing me to a feeling of discomfort, but I was not going to let myself be overpowered, although his sudden change of manner, which formerly had been so conciliatory, was disconcerting. I was preparing to speak, not sure, however, what tone I should adopt, when they began to accuse Mr. Starbuck, inasmuch as he had brought me there, and demanded of him the meaning of an action which seemed so strange. His face, too, had flushed and there was a flash in his eye which betokened rising anger. He sprang to his feet, and I saw that the portly Boston merchant had become the wild sailor of the Bon Homme Richard again. Just then I liked the change.

"This young gentleman, Mr. Ten Broeck, and his comrades came here at my invitation," he said, "and with the knowledge and consent of most of you. That he is a spy, or his friends are spies, I do not believe. Any charges that you make against him or them, you make against me too."

He was very angry now, and a glass broke with a crash under his hand. His wrathful little speech put a new phase upon the matter, and some called out to me to say what I had to say for myself, which I was glad to do, waiting only for the opportunity hitherto denied to me.

Anger and conviction of right often spur one who may not be an orator into a sort of rude eloquence, and the words came to me so fast that I had nothing to do but to arrange them in proper order. I admitted that the man sitting at the head of the table beside the president of the feast was my cousin, a fact that I could not help, and about which I was never consulted, and of which I was now ashamed; but he, and not I, was the spy; that he had been driven from Wash-

ington because he had been engaged in a hostile business; that I, not he, had been persecuted, and that he, not I, was the persecutor. I went on to tell the whole tale, to which they listened with great attention, though I noticed a sneer or an incredulous smile on the face of more than one. Major Northcote had sat down and did not seek to interrupt me, but looked at me with his old ironical smile, which now said plainly: "You are a boy and you are not a match for me in the game of intrigue."

"What do you say to this, Major Northcote?" asked Mr. Pickering when I had finished.

"A fabrication," he replied; "very skilfully and cleverly done, I will admit, but still a fabrication. Ask him if he is not travelling in the East in behalf of the American Government."

They looked at me, and I am afraid I reddened a little, for I was travelling as he said, though he had insinuated and managed to put an entirely false meaning upon my action.

"Certainly," I replied, "but not as a spy of the kind you mean. If you do not believe me, and want to get the facts about Major Northcote, send a trustworthy man of your own to Washington and let him investigate."

But my partial admission seemed to operate as a proof of guilt.

"We must request you and your friends, Mr. Mercer and Mr. Courtenay, to withdraw," said Mr. Pickering.

"No request is needed," said Mercer; "we take great pleasure in withdrawing, and hope that we will not be contaminated by the company we have inadvertently kept. We may not possess as much wisdom as you gentlemen, but we do not give aid, comfort, and approval to a known enemy, and we hope never to be the traitors that you are."

They received this little speech, made in the legal way that Mercer affected sometimes, in dead silence, and

we rose, all three of us, burning with anger at the situation in which we had been placed.

"I go with you, gentlemen," said Jonathan Starbuck, rising with us.

"Mr. Starbuck was mistaken in his young friends," said one of the Federalists, Tories rather, suavely; "and as we all know it was an honest mistake, we would prefer for him to stay."

"Mr. Starbuck was not mistaken in his young friends," said the veteran calmly, "but he was mistaken in his old friends. When I came here I had no idea of the relationship Major Northcote bore to Mr. Ten Broeck, and since I have heard the tales of both I prefer to believe Mr. Ten Broeck's. I think you have let party feelings go too far, and I will have nothing more to do with such plotting against the Government."

My heart warmed with a great glow toward him, and we stalked out of the room, Mr. Starbuck at our head, the others saying nothing, though Major Northcote followed me with his ironical look, now showing a gleam of triumph also, but so greatly were we upheld by the companionship and approval of Mr. Starbuck that we did not mind, and a little sense of elation mingled with our other feelings.

We went to our room, and Mr. Starbuck followed us there, showing plainly that he was in great trouble of mind and fearing that we would blame him for having led us into an unpleasant trap. I did not like to see an old man begging the pardon of those who were young enough to be his sons, and we disclaimed any feeling of offence against him with all the vigour and emphasis at our command. Thus talking we pacified him, and feeling in a better humour with ourselves we four took a warm drink together and swore eternal loyalty to the Constitution, the republic, the only true Government on earth, and to the President at Washington, whoever

he might be, whether Federalist, Republican, or something that was neither.

On the morning of the second day thereafter we had the pleasure of reading of the disgraceful conduct of three young men from the West—names omitted, in accordance with the custom of the times—at a private banquet given by some of the most distinguished and worthy men of Massachusetts, where they had called their elders and betters foul names, had abused the honest fame of New England, and at last had become so turbulent that it was necessary to put them out of the room with force. But our names were not there, and we did not care.

“Hereafter I shall keep away from banquets,” said Mercer, “since they bring one only trouble and indigestion.”

CHAPTER XV.

WHAT WE SAW IN NEW YORK BAY.

THERE was no occasion for me to linger in Boston, since immediately upon my arrival there I had received sufficient proof of the temper of its leading men. The old, invincible spirit of New England seemed to be dead, and though it was New England who clamoured the loudest against our wrongs she would refuse absolutely to try the only cure—war. Among the sailors and the countrymen who came in were many who believed with us of the West, but their voices were not heard in the outcry of the more powerful and wealthy classes against the appeal to the sword. So I began the return journey, and Courtenay and Mercer went with me. Wishing to vary our experience we took ship for New York, securing passage on the stout schooner John Hancock, commanded by Captain Benjamin Crowell, a Maine man after our own hearts.

We had stormy weather rounding Cape Cod, and Courtenay, Mercer, and I suffered much from seasickness, but in the bright weather following we recovered, and our discouraged spirits rose. The voyage then became a pleasure, but I do not think that I would like to be a sailor. The land does not slip from under one's feet. We fell into a calm lasting two days, but at the end of that time a good wind sprang up, and, passing around Long Island, we approached Sandy Hook one fine morning early in May. We could see already the wooded coasts of New Jersey, fresh with the tender green of

young foliage, and the fine haze beyond it which was the effect either of a cloud or the smoke rising from the many tall chimneys of distant New York. Before us were other ships, their white sails hovering on the blue water. Above us glittered the great globe of the sun. Afar the fisher boats swam in a sea of purple and azure and gold. I was full of joyful anticipations, partly the growth of youth and a splendid day. Moreover, I liked New York, and I was sure that Marian would be there.

But anxiety and suspense were putting wrinkles and crow's feet into the face of Captain Crowell, and I was astonished at the evident trouble in his manner, for he was not a man who took readily to grief. After some hesitation, since one does not rashly address the captain of a ship on his own deck, I asked him the cause.

He pointed a finger toward the group of distant ships ahead of us.

"We are about to run the blockade," he replied. "An American must do it, going from port to port of his own country. See the largest of those ships, the one near the centre."

I looked, knew, and remembered; the ship was the *Guerriere*. I could recognise her gleaming white and gold prow, the French fashion of her sides and rigging; and even if these were not sufficient, there flew the hated flag of England.

"Why, yours is but a coasting schooner from Boston to New York," I said to Captain Crowell in reply to his look.

"That won't keep her from being searched," he replied, "and maybe I will lose two or three of my best sailors. We will have to anchor alongside that confounded British ship, under her guns, just as if we were a prize, and stay there as long as she chooses to keep us. To the devil with a government that will stand this, I say!"

Mercer and Courtenay had joined us.

"Why, it's illegal, contrary to all the laws of nations," said Mercer, the lawyer.

"Which has never kept it from being done, and nothing will keep it from being done except the twenty-four-pounders of a forty-four, and that's the best law I know of," replied the captain. "Let them give our boys a chance. Do you know what they did in the West Indies when we fought there with France, and how we battered up the Barbary corsairs, though they always had more guns and men than we? Give 'em a chance, and they'll teach that frigate yonder and others like her what it is to fight with the best men that sail the sea."

But I belonged to the school of Mr. Jefferson, who believed that in case of war our little navy should be sealed up in port, or otherwise we would lose it. In my mind the majesty of England, backed by a thousand war ships and the memories of the Nile and Trafalgar, was supreme upon the sea.

The *Guerriere* lay almost at the mouth of the bay. What had become of her consort, the large frigate, I did not know, though I supposed that she was in mischief wherever she might be. Around her lay a little fleet of American merchantmen, two or three from European ports. All had been searched by the Briton, or would be, and, as we supposed she would, she signalled for us to stop, and stop we did, since there was no recourse. I was familiar already with the sight of the *Guerriere*, and this was only another insult and injury added to the list we owed to her and the country whose flag she carried—England.

A boat containing an officer and half dozen men left the *Guerriere* and pulled for us.

"Don't you know him?" asked Courtenay, who stood beside me.

"Know whom?"

"The English officer, the man commanding the boat."

The officer turned his face at that moment and I recognised Allyn, the lieutenant whose efforts to recapture the sailor, Patterson, we had defeated. He was coming now to search the ship on which we were passengers, and I felt some apprehension, since the arrogance and presumption of the British naval officers at that time passes the belief of the present day, and I knew that he did not like me, nor without cause either.

Captain Crowell stood on the deck to receive the lieutenant, his hands in his pocket, face and manner surly. I knew that he would rather have met the Englishman cutlass in hand, and that here was another in whom dwelled the spirit of the *Bon Homme Richard*.

Allyn and four of his men climbed upon the deck. Looking across at the *Guerriere* I saw that we lay directly under her guns, and if she chose she could blow us into chips with a single broadside.

Allyn demanded the name of the ship and her captain.

"The schooner John Hancock, with a mixed cargo from Boston to New York," replied Crowell, "and I am her captain, Benjamin Crowell, of Portland, Maine, damn you!"

Allyn's face flushed and he made a gesture of anger.

"Oaths are out of place, Captain Crowell," he said, "and they may do you harm."

"I happen to be standing upon my own deck, in one of our own ports," replied the captain. "My country and yours are not at war. Why shouldn't I pitch you into the sea for threatening me? What right have you here?"

"There is my right," said Allyn, turning and pointing to the guns of the *Guerriere*.

"You speak truly," I said, stepping forward. "That is your right, and your only right."

He had not seen me until then, but he did not betray

any surprise, although his eye lighted up with a gleam that seemed to me marvellously like exultation.

"It is you, is it, Ten Broeck, my fine fellow?" he said, and there was much in his manner that puzzled me.

"Yes, it is I, Mr. Ten Broeck," I said, putting emphasis upon the "Mr.," and I want to tell you, Lieutenant Allyn, that you are engaged in a monstrous business. You will push the patience of the American Government too far."

"Impossible," he replied sneeringly.

"Overconfidence is as bad as the lack of it," I replied.

"That's enough, Ten Broeck," he said in a sharp, insolent tone, as if he were a superior speaking to an inferior. "Captain Crowell, I suspected that you had English sailors on board, and it has proved to be the truth. I must take this fine, strapping fellow, Ten Broeck, who deserted from the *Leander* two years ago. Pipe up your crew, and let's see what others you have. Fall in there, Ten Broeck, behind my men."

His look was full of malignant triumph, but I believed I could defeat his attempt, which was of unexampled audacity. So believing, I held myself in reserve and the captain spoke first for me.

"Mr. Ten Broeck is a passenger aboard my ship," he said, amazed, as he had a right to be, at the lieutenant's words, "and has been in the service of the Government at Washington, if he is not now."

"That's a specious tale that he has told you, Captain Crowell," replied Allyn smoothly, "and, of course, you are not to blame, but I know him to be a deserting English sailor from the *Leander*, and he will have to fill out his unexpired time aboard the *Guerriere*."

"I think not," said Mercer, stepping forward, a smile showing upon his smooth, thin face. "There is a law against such things. Your attempt comes in conflict with one of the greatest principles of international law."

"Law! international law! What law?" sneered Allyn.

"This," replied Mercer, drawing a large pistol from his pocket. "Lead and gunpowder, which, as I truly said, constitute the greatest principle in all international law, recognised by all civilized nations."

"And this," said Courtenay, as he also produced a pistol, "is another principle which Lord Coke and all the famous lawyers accept as a necessary corollary of the first."

"And here," said the captain, as he blew a whistle and his men rushed upon the deck, cutlass in hand, "are a whole group of citations and illustrations. Now, damn you again, Mr. Lieutenant Allyn, of the *Guerriere*; if you try to take anybody from my vessel you'll be the first man killed. Your frigate there can blow us to pieces, but you and your men here will be dead before we sink."

It was the old Maine seadog who spoke, the man who afterward became one of the most daring and dangerous privateers, the captain who swept the English Channel for months at a time, and his manner left no doubt of his intentions. Around him swarmed the same crew that was with him when he harried the narrow seas between Britain and France. I saw that Allyn had a task that I did not envy him, and no words were needed from me. Still I could not refrain from saying:

"I think it would be better to postpone the question of my nationality."

He looked at us and he looked at his ship, and then he departed without any threat in words, though his eyes were full of them. Whether he expected to keep me, in good truth, a sailor on board the *Guerriere*, I do not know, but he was wild with hate of me, and must have been willing to do any mad thing, knowing, moreover, that John Pechell, then captain on board the *Guerriere*, was ready for any act of audacity or barbarity.

While the boat was returning to the Guerriere Captain Crowell sailed on, being anxious to escape from under the guns of the Guerriere, as he feared that the frigate might give him a broadside when Allyn went on board and told his tale.

"I thank you, friends," I said to Mercer and Courtenay, "for the splendid briefs you filed in my case, and you, too, captain, for the illustrations and citations which you presented in most timely fashion."

When I looked at Mercer I remembered his saying once that I was a fortunate man. Truly I was fortunate in my friends, and he was not the least among them, when perhaps I had no right to expect it.

We were still standing on the deck, and the captain was looking back at the Guerriere.

"I hope the case is concluded," he replied, "but I'm afraid it isn't. No, by heavens, it's not! The Guerriere is following us!"

The white and gold prow of the frigate was turned toward us, and she was following in our wake into the bay, as if she would catch us before we could reach the peaceful town which lay beyond. There was much shipping about, and directly ahead of us sailed a sightly Yankee brig, on which I read the name Spitfire.

"A Portland craft," said Crowell; "I know her, her captain and every man aboard her; I've raced with her many a time."

But he gave the Spitfire only a single glance, keeping his eyes afterward on the Guerriere, the trouble in his face growing.

"Surely she can not mean to bring us to with a broadside in the bay itself," he said. "I don't see how we could escape a war after that. But the war would be cheap at the price. The John Hancock could stand more than one broadside even from a thirty-eight."

His fierce old face lighted up with joy. Like many another, he wished so much for war that he was ready

to pay a heavy penalty himself if we could only have it.

We were inside the bay now, bearing toward the Narrows, and the *Guerriere* entering also was in closed waters, wholly American. She seemed bound to have us, be the consequences what they might, but suddenly she shifted her course and bore up to the Portland brig, the *Spitfire*.

"We're not her game; it's the *Spitfire*," said Crowell, noting the change. "What new mischief is the *Guerriere* after? We'll shift our course too and see."

The *Guerriere* had ordered the *Spitfire* to lay to, and the brig had no choice but to obey. A boat's crew were sent aboard her as in our case, and the crew were mustered on deck, while the officer, not Allyn this time, questioned them. We could see it all plainly, we lay so close, and we watched with eager interest, for the harbour had been safe, at least for a long time. Other ships and boats drew near, attracted as we were, and they hung in a circle around the frigate and her prey. Captain Crowell stood at the rail looking through a pair of strong glasses. It was evident that the captain of the *Spitfire* was of a different stock from the captain of the *John Hancock*, since we could see no signs of resistance or even of energetic protest on board the brig.

"They are all in line like so many sheep," said Crowell in a voice permeated with disgust.

"What are the British doing?" I asked, though I could see.

"Calling the roll, I suppose, and asking them questions which they have no right to ask, and no American any right to answer."

"Are they taking any of the sailors?"

"No, but they are taking that man who stands to one side, a passenger, too, by God! and I know him—John Deguyo, of my own town of Portland, who is not and never was a sailor. They've begun to impress landsmen

now; they'll take the President himself if they get a chance."

I was witnessing a historic scene of violence and outrage, a piece of unpardonable effrontery, but save for the deck of the Spitfire the day was as peaceful and benevolent as a brilliant May day should be. Before us were the wooded hills of Staten Island, the smoke rising in lazy coils from the chimneys of the farm houses. Sometimes their windows caught the sunlight, and they shone as if made of beaten gold. The waters of the bay rippled before a gentle breeze, and off toward the low Jersey shore it was a shimmering sea of blue and silver and green.

The man, Deguyo, struggled a little, but two of the men-o'-warships seized him, and he ceased to resist, going quietly with his captors to the boat, and thence to the *Guerriere*. Then the frigate changed her course again, and passed out of the harbour with her victim.

"If the American Government stands this," said Courtenay, "I shall become a citizen of Turkey, or some other barbaric country where they are not too good to fight."

"I hope it will not be necessary for us to lose you," I said.

Mercer was silent.

We landed, and, with Captain Crowell, spread the news, which was known already in a vague way, but we gave the facts, and it was a joy to me to see the flame rise among the sailors and the longshoremen and the day workers, who, having no property at stake and no blind belief in the virtue of manners, had a truer sense of the honour and dignity of their country than those who lived in the fine houses on Canal Street.

Leaving the fire to feed itself and to spread, which it was sure to do, I hastened to Fraunce's Tavern, where I hoped that Marian and her father were still staying.

CHAPTER XVI.

BEFORE THE PRESIDENT AGAIN.

A VAGUE plan had taken me in such a hurry to Fraunce's Tavern, and on my way I tried to think out its details, though I could not make them fit into each other quite to my satisfaction. I suppose that some people were surprised at the appearance of a large young man striding so rapidly through the streets, and I brushed roughly against two or three, but I had time to spare only for a hasty apology and no explanations. When I asked at the tavern if Cyrus Pendleton and his daughter, Miss Pendleton, were still there I was informed that they were, and, to my joy, that Miss Pendleton at that moment was in the house.

I sent to Marian a request that I might see her, and she came down at once to the tavern parlour, tall and beautiful, ruddy with strength and health.

"Why, Philip!" she exclaimed. "Have the Puritans driven you out of Boston so soon?"

Then she noticed the excitement in my face and added:

"What has happened? What have you seen?"

I told her as quickly and as succinctly as I could of the scene that I had witnessed in the harbour, passing lightly over the attack upon myself and describing the anger and excitement it was creating in the city. Her face became pale.

"It seems to me to be just cause for war," I said, "and if we don't fight for this we'll have to fight for

something worse later on. I wish to go to Washington at once and carry the first news of it to the President and his Cabinet; all I want is a good excuse for going."

"And tell them everything, Philip," she cried, her eyes flashing and a flush replacing the pallor of her face. "Tell them if we do not fight we are cowards and worse, and do not deserve to be a nation! Tell them if we don't fight we won't be one much longer! Tell them if the men won't fight, the women will!"

She had risen up and stood before me, the red of excitement and indignation dyeing her cheeks and even her brow, her eyes flashing with a spirit which the women of our country will never lose. I had never seen her look more glorious, so full was she of fire and passion, but I was hardly qualified for the rôle which in her excitement she called upon me to play.

"I don't think I'll say those things, however true they may be, to President Madison and his Cabinet, at least not in that way, Marian," I said. "I guess I'd better be polite to the President."

She laughed and coloured a little, and protested that she did not mean exactly that, and asked me to tell it all over again, which I did without diminishing in any way the sinister brutality of the details, and while we were yet talking Cyrus Pendleton came in raging, his Indian-like face making me think of what a great chief's ought to be in the fury of a desperate battle. In his wrath he had forgotten his dislike of seeing me with Marian.

"Have you heard of this, Phil?" he asked in a loud angry voice, never saying what the "this" was.

"Yes, I brought the news of it," I replied, knowing well what he meant, his excitement soothing and calming my own.

"Phil, we can't stand this!"

"No, we can't stand it!"

"The Government must fight."

"I want to carry the news, while it's hot, to Washington."

He looked at me with approval.

"Then you are the right man come at the right time," he said. "Lieutenant-Governor Clinton is here. He and the mayor are talking about this outrage, and they are agreed that the national Government should be informed at once. Come with me, and you shall be their messenger."

Bidding Marian a hasty adieu, I hurried with him to the City Hall, and on the way noticed that the public uproar and excitement were increasing. The populace, always ready to resent a national affront, would not stand this latest outrage, and was crying for retaliation. British officers on shore had fled to their ships for safety, and it is only just to say that some of them were ashamed of their country's overbearing insolence and reckless guilt, qualities which Great Britain seemed then to have concentrated against us.

I was introduced to the mayor and Mr. Clinton by Mr. Pendleton, whose word carried weight, and as I could show, moreover, that I had been employed in Mr. Gallatin's office it was no trouble for me to secure the transmission of the despatches. In truth, I seemed, as Mr. Pendleton said, to be the right man come at the right time. The letters were made ready at once, intrusted to me in a sealed package directed to the President, and I departed, with their injunction to hasten to Washington and beware of mischances.

In the streets again I found that the excitement had not been allayed; on the contrary, the tumult was increasing, and a crowd of men shaking sticks were singing patriotic songs and shouting, "Down with Britain!" If the men in the street had possessed the power the Guerriere would have been blown into splinters within the next five minutes. Some of the merchants were closing their stores, and the people in carriages

were hastening away as if they would escape from a mob.

At Fraunce's Tavern I found Mercer and Courtenay, and I told them of my mission, which both envied me.

"You have sealed despatches telling all about it, have you not?" asked Mercer.

"Yes."

"Give your own account too; make it strong, it's not illegal."

Clearly it was not "illegal" for me to tell a few words if I were asked, and I promised Mercer if I had the chance to do my best. I was just leaving them when I ran into Bidwell, laced, powdered, and perfumed in the extremest New York style, as if he were that little exotic Van Steenkerk himself.

"Why such a hurry, Ten Broeck?" he asked. "What is the matter?"

"Don't you hear them out there in the street, Bidwell, crying for war? I'm going to Washington as fast as I can to declare it for them. Good-bye."

I left him staring at me.

I had plenty of money and I hired one of the best horses I could find, riding him to Philadelphia, where I changed him for another as good, and thus changing horses at suitable intervals I continued my swift journey southward. I was in the full glory of spring now, not in its beginning. It was all around me, it breathed in the balmy breezes from the south. The old world, bursting into bloom, was turning into a mass of pink and green—pink on the buds, green on the leaves and grass—and the sunshine was full of basking warmth. Spring and summer pay little heed to war or peace, thought I, as I galloped on.

After a ride of three days and a half, or on the morning of the fourth day, I reached Washington. I saw afar the white walls of the Capitol, the sunlight blazing upon them, and the lazy little town snuggling in the

green of the wilderness. The silver ribbon of the Potomac gleamed as of old, and there again was a line of wild ducks flying northward, painted against the blue sky like a long black arrow. A negro, sitting sideways on his mule, was riding slowly to his plowing, a boatman floated sleepily with the current of the river, and the town, like the plowman and the boatman, seemed asleep and dreaming.

I rode to my old boarding house, ate a hasty luncheon, not explaining to my astonished landlady why I had returned so much sooner than she expected me, and then walked over to the Treasury building. I entered as one who knew the way and had the right, and beheld the back of Mr. Gallatin's head shining at me like a sun. He was bending over his desk, and the heaps of papers surged around him. My tread, as I approached, did not arouse him, and I was forced to put my hand upon his shoulder and say:

"Mr. Gallatin!"

He looked up with the customary start of one who is aroused from absorption.

"Mr. Ten Broeck," he said, "I thought I had sent you to the North!"

"So you did, Mr. Gallatin. And I went; I did the work you sent me to do, and I return in haste with news."

He looked at me with curiosity and some apprehension too, as my manner undoubtedly showed excitement. It is a fact that in the years just before 1812 no American statesman expected any news but bad news.

"I have this package, addressed to the President," I said, producing it, "and it is from the mayor of the city of New York. I give it to you for him."

"But you know very well what it contains," he said, taking the package, but still looking at me closely. "Your face shows that. Tell me what it is, if it is not wrong to do so."

There was certainly nothing wrong in my telling, and

I told, setting forth the incidents with all the descriptive power at my command. He sighed, and the look of trouble on his face grew, digging great seams about his mouth and eyes and doubling the wrinkles.

"I suppose they'll come into the inner harbour of New York next and bombard the town because we don't like them," he said. "They did worse at Copenhagen. I suppose we'll have to fight after all. This thing of founding a nation is a difficult task, Philip, my son. But you have done well to come with your budget. I shall show this to the President at his house to-night, and it may be that we will want you there, as you were an eye-witness of the facts. If so, I will send word to you at your room in the afternoon."

Then he questioned me long and carefully about the direct object of my visit to the Northern and Eastern cities, and when I left his office I felt that glow which comes to one who has received the approval of his elders and betters.

I hastened back to my room, and lying down on the bed slept soundly until a messenger arrived with a summons for me to come to the White House. It was evident that both Mr. Gallatin and the President were impressed, as the former had not waited until night to deliver the despatches, and the latter, with equal promptitude, had called a Cabinet meeting in the afternoon. I found myself in the presence of the entire Cabinet for the second time in my life, and was asked to tell my story again, which I did, arraying my facts in what I thought to be the most impressive sequence. They asked me over and over about certain details, but I had fixed them in my mind, and was ready always with the answer. Then they let me go, thanking me and telling me that I would be notified if they wished to obtain from me further information on those points.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE FIRST MESSAGE FROM THE WEST.

I WAITED for a day or two and heard nothing—that is, nothing that I wanted to hear, thinking that the time had come now when the Government must take the risks of war, however great they might be—but I learned that the new British minister, Mr. Foster, a man of amiable temper, from whom an effort to make us some reparation for old wrongs was expected, would be due in a few days in Washington, and on such account the Government regarded the impressment of Deguyo as most untoward. The news of the affair was soon known all over Washington, and while the Government waited the population was in a rage, and the French minister, profiting by the opportunity, egged them on, and wished to know, whenever he met Americans, whether they intended to become the servile subjects of England. I confess that I assisted somewhat in the egging process, and, moreover, I received a letter from Cyrus Pendleton, trusting that I had arrived in safety and that the truth had lost none of its bitterness in my telling.

I had begun to think that this outrage, like all the others, would be passed over, if not forgiven, when I received a message from Mr. Gallatin to visit him at his office.

“It seems that you are to become our regular messenger, Philip, through the process of circumstances,” he said, coming at once to the matter in hand, “and the President has another message for you. Don’t think

that we have forgotten or wish to forget that affair which you saw in New York Bay. Listen! Our frigate, the President, is lying off Fort Severn, at Annapolis. You are to go to her, and here is a letter which you will deliver to her captain, John Rodgers. It orders him to go to sea at once, and cruise up and down the coast for the protection of American commerce, which is preyed upon by both England and France as if we were enemies, though we are at war with neither. That is a very simple message, isn't it?"

"Yes," I said, guessing his meaning by his look, "but Captain Rodgers might ask me questions."

"That is so," he replied, "and there is something I may tell you, and I know no reason that will keep you from telling it to others. The Guerriere, after impressing Deguyo, is reported to have gone southward from New York; and if Captain Rodgers should ask you, you might tell him about all these things, and add, too, that in case he falls in with the Guerriere the President trusts in his ability to present Captain Pechell strong arguments showing why Deguyo should be released at once."

His look was full of meaning, and I understood. Again I resolved that the facts in a message which I bore should not suffer from diminution when I came to explain them by word of mouth. I said to myself, with a little inward laugh, half pride, half ridicule of myself, that if it were necessary for me, single-handed, to bring on a declaration of war against Great Britain, I would do it.

I mounted my horse, and again rode away into the blossoming country, this time through a sleepy part of old Maryland to the dreaming little town of Annapolis. The frigate, the President, lying off Fort Severn, seemed to be the biggest thing in the town or vicinity, and though a landsman myself I admired her size and symmetry, the vast and intricate tracery of masts and spars, and the shining whiteness of her decks. But, despite all this,

she too seemed to share in the general slumber and peace of the place, as if, man-of-war though she was, it was not intended or expected that she should ever fight. My impression of unreadiness was confirmed when I went on board and was forced to deliver the President's letter to a lieutenant. I found the ship almost stripped of her officers—Captain Rodgers was with friends at Havre de Grace, the chaplain and the purser were in that Washington which I had just left, and the sailing master was in Baltimore.

But the lieutenant who received my letter, and who did not dare to open it in the absence of the captain, was a young man, aflame with zeal and enthusiasm, and, remembering that there was no harm in telling him why I came, I told him everything, and he, with equal promptitude, sent off messengers to all the missing officers, bidding them come at once on business of the utmost importance to the country. I stayed to see the officers arrive and the ship depart, feeling that my mission would not be complete until then.

That lieutenant was a fine fellow, and I shall always remember him with pleasure, for he asked me to the cabin, where we drank wine together, and then he took me about the ship, explaining the use of this and the use of that, which I remembered about three minutes, and saying over and over that he hoped the captain would come soon. Thus we talked and walked while the day passed and the shining red globe of the sun slipped out of sight behind the western hills and the twilight fell, and after that the night. Far in the darkness came Captain Rodgers, furious because he was away from his ship when such a message had been sent to him, though it was not his fault, since our little navy had been taught to expect no such errands. Before midnight all the others arrived also, and Captain Rodgers said to me, as I still stood on his deck:

“This frigate sails at daylight, Mr. Ten Broeck, and

I thank you for the able manner in which you have explained the President's letter. But you had better go ashore now and seek a night's sleep; you'll find a fair tavern in the town."

"I'm not sleepy at all," I said; "and, moreover, I can not consider my duty fully done until I see the ship sail."

"I'm sorry to say it, but I'm afraid a landsman will be in the way here."

"I must stay; my duty commands it!"

He said no more, but left me there, and by the light of the lanterns I watched with the deepest interest the busy scene around me: the preparations to sail, the packing of stores, the measuring of ammunition, the noiseless step of the sailors as they slipped about in their bare feet, and the fine discipline of all—the ready and decisive commands of the officers, and the quickness and skill of the sailors in obedience. Landsman as I was, I could see that the captain would keep his word and depart at daylight.

I walked about on the decks watching this—to me—curious spectacle of a man-of-war preparing in haste to sail. The night was dark, clouds sailing past the moon and hiding its face. Ship and men, water and shore swam in a ghostly light, which turned substance into unreality. The sails, shapeless gray clouds, quivered above me. Masts and spars ran away, dim black lines, and where they ended in the darkness I could not see. The sailors slid past me with soundless tread, phantoms themselves. The cannon, the twenty-four-pounders and the eighteens, grew larger and more threatening in the faint light, and the old story of the Flying Dutchman came back to me with marvellous distinctness. Here was I on a phantom ship with a phantom crew, a phantom myself.

"Better go ashore, Mr. Ten Broeck; it will not be long until we see daylight."

It was Captain Rodgers again, giving me fatherly advice which I rejected, as one usually does.

"Captain," I said, "I have stayed up a whole night without sleep more than once in my life, and I must see this ship sail; I feel that the whole responsibility of it rests upon me."

"Very well," he said, "if you take that view of it. I suppose I have nothing to do with this ship and her business."

I could see him smiling through the dusk as he passed on. I stayed where I was, and occasionally a sailor looked curiously at the civilian standing there, so much out of place, but none spoke. The lieutenant who had received me on board the ship gave me a friendly glance as he hurried by, and I strolled presently to the rail and looked over at the dark water, mottled now with faint moonbeams and lapping softly against the ship's side. Around me the noises of departure went on without ceasing. The sails rustled as they puffed out with the wind, masts and spars creaked, and the ship began to groan as she shook up her big body. In the East a gray light was coming, and down where the edge of it touched the earth a line of pink shone.

"Mr. Ten Broeck, the day is at hand and we are about to sail; it is time for you to go ashore."

It was Captain Rodgers warning me for the third time to leave the ship.

"I must see the frigate when she sails, not merely when she is ready to sail. My duty, captain, don't let me forget that."

He passed on, and the light of day increased. The gray belt in the east broadened, the pink edge of it grew and turned to red. Over the waters a silver radiance fell. Shore, fort, and fields swam up from the sea of dusk. The great ship heaved, and the water hissed against her sides.

"Mr. Ten Broeck, the ship is moving, and it is too

late for you to go ashore; I am very sorry, but it was your own fault."

"Captain, I can stand it, and I admit that it was my own fault wholly."

"Come with me to my cabin, Mr. Ten Broeck, and let us drink to the success of this cruise for the protection of American merchantmen."

We drank the wine together with the greatest good will, and then, at the captain's suggestion, I lay down upon a lounge and slept off the chagrin of my unavoidable impressment by a ship of my own country.

When I awoke a sailor was pulling at my shoulder and bidding me prepare for luncheon with the officers. The frigate was swaying gently with the sweep of the water, and I felt none of those qualms which had assailed me on the voyage from Boston to New York. I went upon deck and saw a world shimmering in the sunlight, a sky of silky blue studded with little white clouds like bits of lamb's wool, and an atmosphere clear, radiant, and bracing. A fine wind sang through the rigging, and the sailors on deck took up the strain and carried it on. The great ship was alive, and her timbers caught the tune from wind and sailors and murmured it in a softened undertone.

I took my luncheon with the junior officers, and I am sure that I was welcome. I liked those young fellows, healthy of body and mind, and I began to see that we had not appreciated our ridiculed little navy at its true worth. It was evident from the first that here were men who knew their business to the last detail, and, falling in with their spirit, I began now to believe that, man for man and ship for ship, the Yankee tar had nothing to fear from anybody.

"Captain," I said some time afterward on the deck, "suppose we should fall in with the *Guerriere*, what would you do about the man Deguyo?"

"Well," he said, with much deliberation, "I don't

know that you have any right to ask that question, Mr. Ten Broeck; but if we should meet the *Guerriere* I hope that I may prevail upon her commander to release the impressed young man."

We passed out into the open sea, and beat about without any definite purpose. We had a touch or two of rough weather, and I felt some qualms, but I soon recovered, and a pert midshipmite told me that he thought with ten or fifteen years' experience I might make a fair sailor.

I saw that my presence aboard the ship did not worry the officers, nor did it worry me. I thought that Washington could get along very well in my absence, and if any one should happen to complain I could point to the accidental nature of my voyage. Thus reasoning, I was happy and enjoyed the voyage, the crisp air of the sea, the comradeship of those men who had nothing to do with politics or its mazes, and the hope that something which we would not regret was going to happen.

But as day after day passed and we saw only merchantmen that knew no news, and the wide blaze of the trackless sea, I began to fear that the voyage would end in nothing, until about noon of the fourth day our lookout sighted an approaching sail, which was not new, but added that she was a man-of-war, which was both new and interesting.

"It's the *Guerriere*; it must be that frigate; it can't be any other," said an eager midshipman.

A lieutenant laughed at him for assuming so much so rashly, but in two minutes it was reported all over the ship that we were about to meet the *Guerriere*, and our captain would endeavour to persuade her captain to release an impressed American.

Our course led toward the stranger and hers toward us, and, taking my place upon the deck where I could see best, I watched her. The *Guerriere* was no unknown ship

to me, but whether she and the sail approaching were the same was more than I could tell.

"But we will know very soon," said the captain. "No, by Jove, she intends to leave us!"

The truth of his words was soon apparent, for the strange ship wore round and headed to the south, while she was yet so far away that we could not read her name, and I was not sailor enough to decide from her cut whether it was the *Guerriere*. Yet I thought it was.

"We'll follow," said the captain.

The stranger was headed south and we made all sail after her, gaining on her steadily, though the wind was light, and the captain said that meant a long chase.

It was a new thing for an American ship to pursue an Englishman, but it so happened; that it had not happened before was the fault of the American Government, not of the Americans; now that it was a fact I was inspired with a singular degree of buoyancy, and so I believe was every man aboard our frigate. The sea was a blaze of purple and blue, and behind us was a long track of foam where the water cut apart by the ship rushed together again. The beautiful June afternoon waned and the sea turned gray before us, while the shadows gathered on the horizon. We gained slowly on the strange ship, still far ahead of us, and the march of the twilight promised her refuge in the darkness if she wished it; though we could not tell why she should seek to escape us, since an American had nothing to fear and a Briton boasted that he never ran.

Twilight brought the night in its train, and the stranger hauled to the wind and tacked, going about and about in a way that puzzled me, but left me to guess that she did it in the hope of shaking us off. Yet we could see her through the dusk and always we followed, though thick weather came to the aid of the night. I will not deny that I felt an excitement growing in my mind, a belief now, a hope before, that I was about to wit-

ness an event of consequence. So believing, I would not leave the deck; not for supper nor for anything else, but stood there watching the distant ship which I believed to be the *Guerriere*, though I could not tell. When I looked about at the officers and crew I was confirmed in my opinion that an event was approaching, since all were quiet and ready, and, like I, seemed to be expectant.

The night deepened and the outlines of the strange vessel became misty, making her size and character doubtful. But with a better wind we were gaining fast upon her now, and a little after eight o'clock we came up close on the weather bow of the stranger, who seemed to abandon the effort to escape. Then the two ships hovered together, magnified in the dusk, like mountains.

"What ship is that?" hailed Captain Rodgers from our lee rail.

All were silent on the *President*, and his voice, clear and loud, cut with startling force through the darkness.

From the stranger came the answering cry in precisely the same words:

"What ship is that?"

Aboard the other vessel, save for the captain's query, they seemed to be as silent as we. Our captain called again:

"What ship is that?"

No answer.

I could see the misty forms of men on the deck of the stranger looking at us. Our own sailors were dim figures in the dusk. Our captain's lips opened, as if he would repeat the question again, and at the same moment I saw a great red flash blaze from the side of the strange ship, and the deep boom of a cannon shot rolled over the still waters. I felt the rush of air past me, I heard the sweep of round iron, and an eighteen-pound cannon ball crashed into the mainmast of the *President*, some splinters flying with a whiz into the air. A cone of smoke rose.

I stood quite still, and the first thought that flashed upon me was of the Chesapeake. But this was not the Chesapeake, and though our captain had not found time to utter a word—I could see the sudden look of surprise upon his face—there came a flash, an answering roar from our own ship, and a cannon ball, the first messenger of the West, sped across the deck of the stranger. Who fired that shot—fired without orders—I never knew, but if I had known I would never have told, since I would have esteemed him too much.

But the stranger was not content with speaking only once. In an instant I saw the red flash blaze out from her side, and again and again. Three times her cannon boomed—one, two, three—and then a long belt of flame leaped up, as I heard the ripping crash of a broadside, followed by the whistling of iron, the puffing of smoke, and the smash of timber as the shot struck. The stranger was firing into us with all the guns she could bring to bear; but let me repeat it, this was no Chesapeake—we were ready.

“Fire into him! Give him the iron!” cried our captain to his gunners, and in a moment we were in the red blur and shouting fury of a desperate sea combat. It had come upon us with such a rush that I had not time to think of myself until some one shouted to me to look out for the cannon balls, when I dodged behind a huge coil of rope and knelt down, just as eighteen pounds of iron screamed and hissed over my head and went on to cool its rage in the sea beyond us.

The ships were lying close together, and the dusk of a damp, misty night was broken by flash after flash of the cannon—red light following red light so fast that the blaze was unbroken.

I heard the screaming of projectiles, the smash of wood, the whiz of splinters as dangerous as the cannon balls themselves, the shouting of the seamen, the cries of the hurt—the whole a wild medley of noise and fire

and smoke. The smoke rose in huge columns and clothed us like a thick fog, but the battle lanterns were burning, and the cannon fire, too, lit up the decks and cast an angry red over the face of the sea. From the rigging sharpshooters were firing, and through the heavier boom of the great guns one could hear distinctly the sharp crackle of the rifles. The gunners loaded and fired rapidly, but with aim. Sometimes, as the smoke was blown away by their own cannon fire, I could see them distinctly, and then the smoke floating back would hide them or turn them into mere ghostly figures, seeming to be made of vapour themselves. The ship swayed with the swell of the ocean and the concussion of the guns, and the yards creaked peacefully through all the firing.

I began to think now what would be the result of this, of these cannon shots fired out at sea with such suddenness. Surely it was not an affair that two governments could let drift on for years, and it must lead to something that would be a change from the long period of insult and oppression that we had endured, for I never doubted that the strange ship was an Englishman.

Again a cannon ball shrieked over my head, another sent splinters flying, and a boy, a powder monkey, cried out as one tore the flesh of his shoulder. They took him below to the surgeon, and a minute later our gunners raised a great cheer. The stranger's fire was slackening fast, and in ten minutes from the first cannon shot it became only a stray discharge or two. Then the captain ordered ours to cease entirely, for it was evident from the volume of the cannonade that the strange ship was much inferior to ours in calibre. I was sure now that she was not the *Guerriere*, which was of the same class as the *President*, but I was still firm in the belief that she was an Englishman.

The gunners obeyed the order with the same promptness and calmness that they had shown in loading and

firing, and waited to see what would happen. What did happen was a sudden renewal of the stranger's cannonade, for, taking our cessation as proof that we were beaten, he opened anew with many guns. Then the combat which we had rejoiced over as finished was begun again. The clouds of smoke thickened in the damp, misty night, and the quivering of our ship became a roll, for the wind was rising, and, despite the flash of the guns, the darkness increased. Looking up, I could see that there were no stars in the heavens, and all the skies were cloudy, black, and threatening. The firing of the stranger was wild, many balls whistled far above our heads, and still others struck the sea behind the ship, sending up jets of foam. There was much to confuse the aim, for each of the vessels was firing into the smoke-bank, and only by the light of the cannon were the combatants visible to each other. Suddenly the President fired an entire crashing broadside into the heart of the smoke-bank that hid the stranger. I heard the splintering and tearing of wood, the flapping of falling sails, the shriek of men mortally hurt, and the strange ship, under the impact of the shot, seemed to heave up out of the smoke-bank and then to sink back into the sea, winged and helpless. She was beyond the control of her crew now, for she wore around stern on, and another broadside from the President would have raked her fore and aft and annihilated her crew. But that broadside was not given, for it was evident that our enemy's fight was over.

There was again a sudden silence aboard our ship; the gunners stood beside their guns, the sharpshooters in the rigging held their rifles at rest, the frigate rocked in the swell of the sea which lapped against her sides, and the clouds of smoke again drifted slowly from the deck and upward. Our captain hailed the stranger, and some kind of a reply was shouted out, but as we were to windward we could not understand it. Sure now

that she could fight no longer, we ran down under the stranger's lee and hove to, that we might be ready to rescue the crew in case she should sink, which seemed probable.

I did not sleep or lie down that night. I will admit that every nerve in me was quivering with excitement. I, who a week before had dreamed of nothing, less than of this, had just passed through a furious naval battle which might bring untold consequences, and, moreover, I was thrilled to the marrow by the scene itself, the darkness of the night, the moaning of the wind, and the immensity of the sea, limitless to me, a landsman, upon which the two ships rocked side by side, one almost a wreck. The wildness of the enemy's fire had been so great that on the President nobody was hurt save the boy whom I had seen struck by a splinter, but I guessed that on the other ship there would be a much bloodier tale to tell.

As the night advanced, the wind rose still more and the two ships drifted apart, and in the darkness we lost her for awhile. It was a time of suspense and anxiety for us all, since the stranger might go down in the night, leaving no sign, and it was important to know whom we had been fighting. But the long night ended and the slow day came at last. The fiery sun swinging clear of the sea drove away the sombre rain clouds, and the face of the waters stretched before us, a blaze of blue, shot with pink, where the flame of the sun struck through it. But there, two or three miles away, floating like a hulk, was our ship.

"A Briton—a twenty-two-gun sloop, I should say," said Lieutenant Creighton, by whose side I was standing. "What a fool she was to fire into a vessel of our weight, but since the Chesapeake affair any British ship thinks she can bully an American of double her size."

Which was true, but which, nevertheless, proved to be a most unfortunate thing for Englishmen.

We ranged up, and a boat was lowered from our ship.

"Would you like to go in the boat, Mr Ten Broeck?" asked the captain of me. "I think that, after all, it was a good thing you missed going ashore, as you will have to report on this affair, and you will be an extremely important witness."

Of course I volunteered to go in the boat, which was commanded by Lieutenant Creighton, who was instructed to convey to the stranger our regrets at the necessity that led to such an unhappy result, and to offer any assistance that might be needed. These things sound stilted and insincere now, but they were the style then, especially among naval officers, and hitherto it had been the pleasure of the English only to "express regrets."

We pulled toward the shattered ship, and saw lowering faces watching over the rail. But they did not object to our visit aboard, where we were received by Arthur Bingham, commander of his Britannic Majesty's twenty-two-gun corvette *Little Belt*, which had suffered eleven men killed and twenty-one wounded in a combat the night before with the American frigate *President*—more than a double reparation for the murderous and gratuitous assault upon the *Chesapeake*.

But the small courtesies that we had for each other were a mere form, soon discarded as useless. Commander Bingham was in no mood for phrases, nor would I have been, in his place, with my ship half a wreck under me. We gave the name of our ship and he gave his, declining our offer of assistance with the belief that the *Little Belt* was still good enough to reach her port, wherever that might be. So we left him to his dead and his wounded, and, though it is an awful thing to take life, I felt no sorrow for the English, since they had provoked it and they had shed much American blood without redress before that night.

I found that I was bound on a longer voyage than I had expected, as the *President*, in obedience to orders

of which I knew nothing, did not return to the Chesapeake, but sailed for New York. We spoke a Swedish vessel bound for Baltimore, which carried the first news of the fight to an American port, while we jogged leisurely on to New York.

CHAPTER XVIII.

CONVERGING EVENTS.

WHEN we reached New York I bade adieu to my friends of the President, with whom my voyage had been pleasant and most eventful, and hastened ashore, where our adventure was known already, making the arrival of the frigate an occasion for ferment in the city. I hurried to Fraunce's Tavern, intending to write there a letter to Mr. Gallatin which should contain a full and truthful account of the battle and an apology for my voyage on the President. But upon the latter point I anticipated no trouble whatever, since I would be, as Captain Rodgers had put it, a most valuable witness, a civilian hitherto unknown to the crew of the President, and therefore my presence on board her had been a most fortuitous occurrence.

But rapidly, as I walked through the city, I could note the rising tumult, as I had noted it on the day *Deguyo* was seized, although it was now of a different character, for the temper of men's minds was such, made so by long and persistent provocation, that they rejoiced at the shattering of the *Little Belt* and the slaughter of her crew—a just punishment for the battle which she had begun and some small repayment for the innumerable outrages which we had suffered. So in the street I witnessed no emotion save fierce joy, whatever the timid Federalists in their fine houses may have felt.

As I stepped in at the door of Fraunce's Tavern I met Marian Pendleton, who was just about to come out.

"Why, Philip!" she cried in the greatest astonishment. "Where did you come from? We heard that you had been sent to Annapolis with a message and had disappeared. Father had it in a letter from Washington, and there was much talk there about you."

"And I am surprised, too, to see you here," I said without answering her question at once, but taking both her hands in mine. "I thought you had left for Washington weeks ago."

"No, we have stayed on; we have found New York pleasant; our friends Mr. Mercer and Mr. Courtenay are also yet here; but tell me, where have you been?"

"At sea; I've come from a battle."

"At sea! A battle!" Her face was pale, but her eyes had lighted up.

"Yes; I was on the President when she fought the Little Belt, and I've just landed from her."

Then I told her the story, and she listened with sparkling eyes and a face in which a flush had replaced the pallor. She had all the feeling of our Western women against England, nourished as it was by the tales of the English-led and English-armed Indians who came down from the Northwest and slew and burned and outraged along the border. Women, the best of them, remember and cherish animosities longer than men. They, too, at times can cry for war as loudly as the men.

"Oh, Philip," she said, "I am glad it has happened, and I am glad you were there!"

"Perhaps we will have war now," I said, "and that may bring peace and security—nothing else will."

Then she became pale again, and I knew that she was thinking of those things, other than glory, that war is sure to bring. Cyrus Pendleton himself came in, full of the news and flushed with its character, so different from all that had gone before, the red showing through the brown of his lean hawk face, his black eyes snapping.

"I tell you, Phil," he said—he, too, seemed to have

regained his ancient friendliness for me because I had been on the frigate—"we've put the burden on England; it's her business now to show resentment. If she can stand this she can stand more."

He talked on, full of joy, his fiery old soul ablaze. His was no parlour zeal; it was the warlike temper of a man who had carried his life at his rifle's muzzle for twenty years, and was still ready, at sixty, to fight for what he thought the right. In many a log cabin on the border there was another like him. He was so anxious to go to Washington, that he might see what would happen and be present to lend what influence he had to make it happen as he wished, that he ordered Marian to do her packing and be ready for the start on the following morning. I asked to accompany them, and Mercer and Courtenay, who came in soon, decided to do likewise. I discovered that the handsome Miss Constance Eastlake was one of the reasons why Courtenay had lingered in New York, and I was glad to learn from Mercer that she liked Courtenay better than any other man, for I thought her a very fine girl, though not the finest of all. Men were ever fools about women, and yet could not keep away from them, said Mercer in conclusion, and for a little I was sad on his account.

Early summer was in all its freshness and bloom, and we decided that instead of making the journey in stage-coaches we would ride horseback to the capital. The inevitable Bidwell made his appearance as a member of our party, since he, of course, had not thought of leaving New York before the Pendletons.

Few finer or more pleasant journeys have been made than that which we took in the rosy month of June, 1811, from New York to Philadelphia, and thence to Baltimore and on to Washington. Good weather attended us, the roads were dry and hard; about us the country blossomed and bloomed, the apple and the peach trees were cones of pink and white, and the tiny wild

flowers clustered in the grass. My prestige as a warrior, because I had been on the President in the fight, clung to me, and I profited by it to the utmost. I was forced to tell the tale of the battle again and again, and it required much power over self to keep to facts. I could not restrain a cut now and then at Bidwell, who did not seem to be of a warlike character, and once received a rebuke from an unexpected quarter.

"Mr. Bidwell is a courageous man, I think," said Marian—Bidwell was too far away then to hear. "Perhaps he will show it when the opportunity comes."

Cyrus Pendleton's sudden attack of friendliness for me soon cooled a little, though I did not mind, and he still showed plainly that he wished Bidwell's estate and his own to be united, with the marriage certificate of his daughter as the title deed. It was a curious fact, as I have said before, that our Kentucky blue grass barons, who were then England's most embittered foes, copied her landed aristocracy as closely as they could, and the cherished ambition of them all was to found estates feudal in extent and character.

But our talk as we rode southward was not all of war. We had seen something of the richer and more cultivated East. Marian had been welcome in the society of New York, and we of the West, who knew so much of the hardships of life, had begun now to learn a little of its softer side. So it was of these things that we talked often as we rode on through the country that flowered the more as we continued our southward way.

We found Washington in a state of deep quiet, the affair of the Little Belt was growing old, and midsummer, which is very hot at the capital, would soon be there. The English seemed to be surprised that some of their own men and not Americans had been killed, and one day I saw a quiet man of amiable appearance, who, as I was told, was the new British minister, Mr. Foster. My excuses had been accepted by Mr. Gallatin

without comment, but I noticed that he filed my report of the affair very carefully. Thus everything seemed quiet under the summer heats, but we could tell in a day that it was superficial, that behind this seeming veil of peace the storms were gathering. The first note came from the placid, amiable British minister himself, from whom so much of a soothing nature was expected, when he protested in a characteristic British way against our occupation of West Florida, an affair that concerned Spain and ourselves exclusively. From all the western country came the murmur of angly reply.

I was taken back into Mr. Gallatin's office, the Pendletons and Mercer and Courtenay remained in the city, and the summer waned. The green and the freshness gave way to brown and dust, and men's minds were filled with uncertainty. In Europe the power of Bonaparte on land swelled and grew as ever, and he threatened to become master of the whole Continent; the French legions marched only to victory. On the water the English rode supreme as of old; nowhere a foe dared to appear, and between the two, England and France, we were ground, as in all the years that had gone before. The thousands of impressed American sailors still sailed and fought against their will on the British ships, the British fleets still patrolled our coasts, seeking new victims, our own ships everywhere were exposed to search and confiscation, trade was going to ruin, there was no foot that did not feel the pinch of the shoe, and from all the regions behind the hills came the cry that it was better to fight; yet the Government made no preparations, though already, our negotiations with the chiefs failing, the formidable Northwestern tribes, led by the redoubtable Tecumseh and his brother, the Prophet, yielding to English hints and English promises, were in open war on the border, where they were confronted by the armed farmers of the West. I heard of this war with the deepest anxiety. Many of my own personal

friends had gone with Harrison's army into the Indiana wilderness, where the white man always fought at a great disadvantage, and there was no one in Kentucky who had not heard the tale of St. Clair's terrible defeat, how his army was annihilated in the winter wilderness by an unseen foe, as Braddock's English army had been forty years before. But the army was buried in the forest, and we were to hear nothing more of it until such time as chance willed for news to filter through the stretches of wooded desolation.

The autumn waned, following in the path of the dead summer, the woods gleamed with the brilliant foliage, the variations and the changing colours of Indian summer, the smoky haze rose on the horizon, the sharp touch of cold crept into the air, and the keen winds portended the coming winter. One heard nothing in the little capital of Washington but politics; President Madison's re-election was assured, and it seemed that a war Congress would come in with him, though New England and the East would have nothing of it. Mr. Clay was a candidate for the House from the Lexington district, and everybody said that he would be chosen Speaker when he came to Washington, using all his power in that great position to bring on the proposed war. But still the Government prepared nothing for what was certainly coming. The great men theorized and talked of an ideal state which would know naught of war, which would have neither army nor navy, which in all its dealings with foreign states should rely upon the single principle of justice, closing their eyes to the fact that all the world was at war, that force not justice was the single principle then ruling all things, and the man who did not arm consigned himself to the wolves. The nearer war came and the more we talked about it, the less ready we were for it, and with a divided country the most sanguine, who are always the youngest, could well shrink before the prospect.

I walked up Pennsylvania Avenue a windy morning in November and saw Courtenay approaching, waving his hat in his hand and shouting hurrah to me as he came. I thought he was suffering from a mild attack of lunacy and told him so, but he continued his shouting, and when he reached me grasped my hand and shook it fervently.

"What on earth is wrong with you, Felix?" I asked.

"Nothing is wrong with me," he replied exuberantly. "It is wrong with the other fellows and their English allies."

"What do you mean?"

"We've beaten all the Northwestern tribes. The news came this morning. It was at Tippecanoe; there had been palavers about peace, and they treacherously rushed our men in the dusk before the dawn, but they were beaten and the great medicine man, the Prophet, was killed on the field. Their Northwestern confederacy has gone to pieces and the border is safe."

This, in truth, was great and good news, and the whole city was soon rejoicing with a joy that it had a good right to feel, for the Northwestern Indians were a most formidable foe, who afterward proved themselves more than once to be better than their allies, the British regulars.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE APOSTLE OF PEACE.

THE war feeling grew, the new Congress came in, and Mr. Clay, as was predicted, became Speaker of the House, to be recognised at once as the leader of the war party. But things still lagged, though everybody could see that the war clouds hovered lower, and still, though war seemed inevitable, the Government was supine. Mercer railed at me bitterly about what he was pleased to call my Government, because I was one of its clerks. The winter was passing, a winter which had been pleasant to me, despite the national anxieties, for Washington was gay socially, and I saw Marian often, when Mr. Gallatin said to me as he was leaving the office one afternoon:

“Philip, as you have shown yourself to be a trustworthy messenger, I want you to take up that duty again. Have your horse ready and start in the morning for Monticello. I will give you a letter to Mr. Jefferson which will show that you came from us. Talk to him about this war, see what he thinks, and report to us. But say nothing of it to anybody else. Be discreet, you understand.”

I understood very well, for it was charged publicly, especially by the Federalists, that Mr. Madison was the creature of Mr. Jefferson, who had made him his successor and controlled the administration at the hundred-mile-range of Monticello, which was a falsehood, though it was eminently proper that the President and his Cabi-

net should obtain the advice of the greatest living American on the most important subject of the day. But it must be kept secret, that it might not furnish capital to unscrupulous political opponents.

I shrank a moment from so delicate a task, and then accepted it, for I was flattered, and, moreover, I had never yet seen Mr. Jefferson, a man who exerted a greater influence than any other upon our nation, with the possible exception of Washington.

I mounted my horse on a raw, cold morning in late winter and rode to Monticello, carrying in my waistcoat pocket a letter of introduction to Mr. Jefferson which was to do part of my work for me, though I was to rely upon what tact and address I might have for the remainder. It was a hundred miles from Washington to Monticello, over a red road heavy with mud, and I crossed eight deep rivers, five of them without bridges. Virginia was a great State then, perhaps the greatest State in our Union, but I, who had returned so recently from two trips into the North, noticed a sad contrast. I fear that our fine Virginia gentlemen thought more of sounding political principles in the abstract and the empty triumphs of oratory than of personal thrift, economy, and neatness, which I think must lie at the foundation of a strong nation.

I saw on either side of the road fields worn out already by careless cropping, deserted and growing up in red sassafras bushes, and several times I met the fine old Virginia gentlemen, still wearing the costume of fifteen or twenty years earlier, powdered hair, three-cornered hat, long cue, white top breeches, and fine coats of buff or other bright colour. Yet their dress always lacked the final touch of neatness and care, and it seemed to me that their houses, large, fine, and imposing, yet spotted with neglected weather stains, and with the shabby negro cabins huddling in the rear, were a reflex of themselves, their eyes fixed too much upon big

things to do the little things which make up the big things.

With bad weather and worse roads it took me three days to make the journey of a hundred miles, but at last I came within sight of Monticello, Mr. Jefferson's spacious mansion of antique plan, with its rolling hills and fertile fields around it, and the blue haze of the Blue Ridge behind it, a fit abode for a man who had seen nearly all and had had nearly all that this world offers—one who had lived at the French court in its wildest luxury and recklessness, who had passed through our own Revolution and that other of France far bloodier and more terrible, who had been for eight years the President of our nation, and for many more years than that the most powerful man in it, and yet through all had been a dreamer imagining a state of perfect peace, peopled only by farmers, when all the world was at war, with blows random or intended falling incessantly upon us; a great and good man who worked for the future, and yet made some terrible mistakes in the present.

I knew that Mr. Jefferson, the greatest of democrats, was an austere man, fond only of the society of men cultivated like himself, but I knew also that he consistently cared nothing for the forms of ceremony and that I would have no trouble in approaching him at Monticello. His farm, or rather estate, was much neater than the others, for a love and skilful practice of agriculture came within the scope of his wide activities; yet I saw many slouchy negroes about, and they paid so little attention to me that I hitched my horse at a post unnoticed, walked upon the porch, and thumped at the door with the butt of my riding whip.

A tall man, far gone in years and with scanty, longish red hair, opened the door. He wore home-made jeans trousers and a richly embroidered loose velvet dressing jacket, coat and trousers, forming a strange contrast. It

was Mr. Jefferson himself, and I knew him at once, though I had never seen him before.

I gave him my name and showed him my letter of introduction, and he became at once the hospitable Southern host. Shambling in front, he led the way into a room in which a wood fire crackled on a wide hearth. He gave me a chair himself and then punched the fire with an iron poker. There was no servant about.

"I have some twenty or thirty lazy negroes to wait on me," he said, "but I do not recall when I was able to find one of them at the time I wanted him."

Their absence did not appear to annoy him, and he bustled about, talking of many things with all the ease and charm of a man who had known the great world and had been equal to it.

The room was like its master, a mass of contradictions, Old World elegance and New World rudeness; on the floor some rich European rugs and a piece of rough home-made Virginia carpet, some chairs of wood that had been carved and twisted in France or Italy, and two more of rude handwork, probably by his own negroes. But everywhere on the tables, the chairs, the shelves, and the floor were books, and a hasty glance was sufficient to show that they were the books of the masters.

He discovered very soon why I came, and I had not expected otherwise. There was no desire to fence with Mr. Jefferson, and if it had been so I would not have been sent on such an errand; it was intended from the first that he should know without preliminaries. The mention of war threw him into a distemper. He had fought so long against it, he had thought it the greatest of all evils, an evil that could be banished from the world, and now the party of which he was the founder and still the head was hurrying it on; the President whom he had helped most to make would choose it, too, and yet he could not say no to them, as he could find no argument against them but the single ignoble one of risk.

"I will have nothing to do with it! Nothing! Nothing!" he said, a certain despair showing in his tone at the crash of his most beloved theory. "Tell them I am only a private citizen of the United States, no more than the million others, and I have no part in governments or policies."

Then he added in a milder tone:

"Tell them I am to found a university here and am trying to discover a method of restoring the exhausted lands of Virginia. The two things will keep me busy for the remainder of my life."

When I left he followed me to the hitching post and gave me a hearty handshake at good-bye. Then he threw the remains of an old Continental overcoat over his shoulders, called to a couple of hounds, and walked away to manage the work of some negroes on a new tobacco barn.

CHAPTER XX.

THE GUNS OF THE CONSTITUTION.

THE winter passed, the spring came again, and the world bloomed afresh; spring yielded to summer, and on one of its early days I took Marian Pendleton walking in the grounds of the Capitol. I did not go far from the building itself and she seemed to wonder why.

"Why do you stick so close to those walls, Philip?" she asked. "There is nothing in there but a tiresome old Congress that talked the winter away, then talked the spring to death, and is now dooming summer to the same fate."

But I remained near the walls and steps, nevertheless, and presently we heard a shout and the excited clamour of many voices. People rushed out of the building, and their faces bore great news. Among them was Courtenay, unable to restrain himself.

"It has been done at last, Philip!" he cried to me.

"What has been done? What is it?" asked Marian.

"War! War!" said Courtenay. "We have declared war at last against Great Britain! We have taken our grievances to the last court, all others failing!"

He spoke the truth, or what was as good as the truth, for the House had voted for war, and the Senate, two weeks later, passed the measure, with the President's proclamation quickly following. After years of patient and impatient endurance we had chosen the sword at last, but without an army, without generals, without military

stores, and with ships that a man could almost count on the fingers of his two hands against the thousand of our antagonist. Until the end the Administration had persisted in its policy of no preparations, and when war was voted none could fail to notice the ominous fact that New England was almost solidly against it, and the Middle States divided.

When that which I had long sought came, I felt weak and afraid, and for the moment was sorry that I had my wish, knowing so well our unready state and the slender resources that we had for preparations, even at this late hour. Men around me were shouting for the victories that they knew would come to-morrow, but I began to understand what an easy thing it is to cry for war when it is far off, and how different it looks when it stands before your face.

The war opened, and what the cautious had expected befell us. Hull, a senile imbecile, surrendered without firing a shot; the brave Kentucky militia, half armed, half equipped, and led by generals who were only talking lawyers, marched hundreds of miles through the wilderness and arrived at the Canadian border half dead with fatigue and scanty food, only to be beaten by inferior numbers on ground that they did not know. Thus, I say, the war, after being put off with disgrace, opened with disgrace and continued so for a while, until there came a glorious burst of sunlight from a quarter expected by few of us.

I was walking up Pennsylvania Avenue one day, despondent over the disasters and not allowed by Mr. Galatin, my patron, whose right to my services could not be denied, to go to Kentucky, where I wished to join our forces, when I met Charlton, the young naval officer of my early acquaintance. I had supposed him off at sea somewhere dodging the English ships, and was astonished to see him there in Washington.

"You here!" I said.

"Yes, I'm here, Ten Broeck," he replied, "and I bring great news, glorious news."

I looked at him in doubt; one expected news those days, but not glorious news.

"I came from Boston," he said, "and I've brought the flag of the *Guerriere* as a present to the President; it's full of holes, but it will do, for we put them there."

The *Guerriere*! The ship which I and all Americans had so much cause to hate!

"The *Guerriere*!" I cried. "What of her! What do you mean by saying that you bring her flag as a present to the President?"

"It's all that was left to bring," he said joyously. "The rest of her is floating somewhere between the top and bottom of the Atlantic, sent there by the guns of the Constitution. I saw it done, for I was there to help. I'm not in such a hurry that I can't tell you all about it. Come with me."

I went with him, and he told me the famous old story; how the slanders they had been pouring on us for years were hurled back at them from the mouths of the guns of the Constitution; how Dacres said the Constitution was coming down too boldly for a Yankee, and his surprise, from which he never recovered, when his ship was shot to pieces under him. Every American knows the tale now.

We had a great celebration of the Constitution's victory, and then came the blood-stained flag of another British frigate, the *Macedonian*, taken off the coast of Africa by the United States, the combat, as before, being one-sided from beginning to end and never in doubt for a moment. The victories crowded on us, and the little ships as well as the big ones took a hand. Most glorious of all was the news of the *Wasp*, and how she fought the *Frolic* in a roaring sea with the waves tumbling over each other, the ships rising and falling on their sides, their guns going under water sometimes and then touch-

ing each other. Their ship was bigger than ours and had more and heavier guns, but it ended just the same, for our guns were manned by better men, and when the two ships locked and it came to boarding, at which the English claim to excel, it was our men who boarded and not theirs, and their ship was ours.

And now a most wonderful change came over the British Admiralty. Before the war any ship of theirs could whip any of ours double her size; they knew our ships, had visited them, dined aboard them, and ridiculed them; but lo! the British Admiralty issued a strict order to their captains that no thirty-eight-gun frigate of theirs should fight a forty-four of ours, and their Pique set the example by running away from the Constitution in the night in the West Indies. In six or eight months our little navy of twenty against their thousand had captured or sunk more ships of theirs than all the navies of France, Holland, Denmark, and Spain combined had been able to take from them in twenty years of incessant fighting. Can you wonder, can any one wonder that we rejoiced? We who had been called cowards, liars, cheats, and everything that is bad by them, rejoiced and still rejoice, and I know we had ample cause. Let me add, too, that the quality of our foe was another reason why we were so glad when we beat him. We have never cared much for any of our victories except those that we have won over the English.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE COMING OF THE FOE.

THE winter came again, and on the frontier we still wallowed deep in the mire of disgrace, for we had only talking generals, strident lawyers, who talked the army into mortal sickness on the march, talked in the face of the foe, and, captured, talked on. Then we thrilled with horror at the news of the Raisin, where our brave Kentuckians were captured and massacred by the Indians. Two of those who fell there under the Indian tomahawk had been my playmates, and it was not a thing to soothe one's hate of the foe.

Our spirits were dashed again by the taking of our Chesapeake by their Shannon, for the American seamen had fallen into the British fault and grown too confident, but it was only for a little while. Our career of triumph upon the sea was renewed, and always the American ship was the victor. Then came the capture of their entire fleet on Erie by ours, and even on land the war began to turn in our favour, for a thousand mounted Kentuckians galloped over their entire army at the Thames and slew Tecumseh, the greatest and most dangerous of the Indian chiefs. But still New England sulked, and our ports were blockaded by their overwhelming fleets, and the lawyers talked on and led our armies, sometimes to victory, sometimes to defeat, but never to victory through any merit of theirs.

Cyrus Pendleton went to Kentucky once on business, and even at his age would have joined the army on

the Canadian frontier had his commercial interests permitted him, but he came back to Washington and remained there, alternately raging and rejoicing as came the news of defeat or victory. Marian did not accompany him to Kentucky, but was in Washington through all this period, and I often saw her. Bidwell, who had become a thorough dandy now, though not quite so extreme as Van Steenkerk, was there too, and he watched me with a jealous eye.

I noticed a change in Marian. She had been an advocate of war, and nobody's indignation had been greater than hers when the report of some new act of oppression came, but she became silent upon this subject, save to express a hope now and then that it would end soon. The captured flags of the *Guerriere* and the *Macedonian*, brought to Washington with the dried blood upon them, had shocked her. She could only see now that war meant suffering, wounds, and death. The brave girl whom I had known so long became tender and sad when she spoke of the wounded soldiers on the battlefields in the dim Northern forests. Among all the women in Washington this spirit ruled, and I think it should ever be the pride of the American race, men and women alike, that in battle, and before and after, our humanity has not been stained by ill treatment of the vanquished—a boast that no European nation can rightly make.

Time went on, and the war with it. In Europe the Continent was in flames; Napoleon had made his retreat from Moscow and was fighting allied Europe with a courage and skill that have not been equalled since lone Hannibal made his stand against Rome. We watched events there with scarcely less interest than those in our own country, and when another winter passed and the news came that Napoleon had been beaten to the ground at last, it seemed as if disasters were closing in upon our young country, for all the armies of Britain were released from European warfare and were sent against us.

We were now to fight single-handed with the greatest military power in the world. The veterans of Wellington, who had beaten the veterans of Napoleon in Spain, were shipped from the Garonne to America to fight us. The British fleets covered the seas, and all the vast military resources raised for the combat with Napoleon were now directed against the young United States. In every court of Europe it was thought that our time had come, but they forgot there that a republic is strongest when it faces the greatest danger.

We soon had a taste of their quality. Their ships already upon our coasts outnumbered our own ten to one, and the first order of the British admiral to his captains was to ravage and destroy every American town that he could take. Our foe had ceased to be civilized. But this brought its own punishment, for when such tales as these came in, lukewarm or hostile New England began to rise and join us, ashamed of her treasonable conduct before, and when the New Englanders at last made up their minds to fight they fought with all the courage and tenacity that they had shown in the Revolution, and proved again on the battlefield and at the cannon's mouth that the New Englanders could outlast the old Englanders.

We were now in the third year of the war, and the British were pouring troops upon our continent and their fleets and transports were everywhere. It was reported that they would strike at every seaboard city, and it was said that Washington itself would be menaced. But the Government could not believe it. "Attack Washington? How absurd!" the President and his Cabinet said. "Why, Washington is nothing but a village. What have they to gain by it?" So they made no defence, fortified nothing, raised no armies, and waited in calmness and confidence.

Meantime our commissioners had gone to meet those of England at Ghent, in Belgium, to consider a treaty

of peace, the English demanding everything. Mr. Galatin was one of the commissioners, but at his order I remained in the Treasury office with his successor, Mr. Campbell.

So you may well understand that Washington was thunderstruck when, one warm August morning, an express messenger galloped into town with the news that fifty British ships of war, loaded down with troops, had arrived in the Potomac and that their army would soon be marching into the capital. I saw the man myself and talked with him after he had delivered his message. He had seen the ships, he did not exaggerate, and beyond a doubt the full danger was upon us, and we had done nothing to stop the invaders. Not a ditch was dug, not an earthwork, and no regular army existed save that which sprawled in legal handwriting across the pages of good paper. With the enemy marching upon us, we selected a general, and, following our habit in that war, we took a Baltimore lawyer, noted for his oratory, and told him to create defences, armies, and victories, all of which he devoutly believed he could do, and for fear that he couldn't do it, everybody in Washington began to show him the way it ought to be done.

I had ample opportunity now to enlist and serve my country in the field as well as in an office, for with the British almost in sight of the capital Mr. Campbell could not say me no, and I joined a company of volunteers, having Bidwell and Cyrus Pendleton himself as comrades. Courtenay and Mercer had long since gone to the Southwest to join the army that Jackson was leading against the Creek nation.

I had urged Cyrus Pendleton to send Marian to Georgetown, where she could stay in the house of some friends, and the sanguine old man yielded to what he called a useless precaution, saying that the English might get a view of Washington—and he hoped that it would do them good—but that would be all.

I saw Marian just before her departure.

"Philip," she said, "I can only ask you to be a brave soldier, and that I know you will be."

Then she was gone.

The militia began to come in from Virginia and Maryland. There was spirit enough before the fight, but of discipline, leadership, preparation—nothing. They tramped into Washington, some in their farmer clothes and with the sod of the furrow yet on them; others wore an army coat and homespun jeans trousers. A few had complete uniforms. Most of them had their squirrel rifles and could not have fastened bayonets upon their muzzles if it had been in the power of the Government to give them. Many had no ammunition and nowhere to obtain it. But all had plenty of advice, and, with the freedom and equality of our country, were quite willing to give it to the President.

Their camp fires burned in the streets and grounds of Washington and flared through the nights, while the generals built defences on the maps and the weary President listened to more advice than was ever before given to one man in the same time. Now I saw how civilians can make war, and, seeing, I wondered. Somebody said to me:

"You may beat them, Ten Broeck; there are enough of you. But do all armies look like this?"

I could not say truthfully, for it was the first of my knowledge, but I hoped not, and, at last, part of us marched out to a place called Old Fields to meet the advancing British, where we promptly ran, and ran well, at the first sight of the enemy; one had no choice, he had to keep up with the crowd, and back we came to Washington, leaving the enemy but nine miles from the capital.

All sorts of rumours reached us that the British were to attack at this point or that point, and we marched from one to the other, until our feet grew sore

and our muscles ached and we called aloud for fight or rest.

The days grew hotter, the sun blazed on us, and the dust kicked up by many marching feet became one vast, interminable cloud, whitening our clothing, plastering our faces, filling eyes, nose, and ears, and creeping down our throats. Nothing impressed me like the dust, which, taking the place of atmosphere, was everywhere, and hot, tired, and hungry, we swore at it; meanwhile, our confidence in our officers and, most of all, in ourselves was slipping away, as we wore out both strength and courage in vain and useless marches.

We heard at last that Bladensburg would be the battlefield, and, breathing dust, dripping sweat, and swearing many oaths, we marched to a place called the Wood Yard, where we camped.

We did not know yet when the British would come, and while some of us toiled at the earthwork others sought the rest of which they stood in so much need.

We were scattered over a plain and some gentle hills, and the men who were not busy with shovel and spade lay upon the ground panting and wiping their dripping faces. A confused clamour, the thud of the picks as they were struck into the earth, the rattle of weapons, and the hum of many voices floated over the field. Sometimes the soldiers quarrelled with their officers and disputed their orders, and now and then an excited horse, breaking from its owner, would gallop through the lines, scattering the men like a cavalry charge and drawing a stream of oaths after him.

The sun shone down upon us with a hard brilliancy that relaxed our muscles, shortened our breath, and found every pore in our bodies. The huge dust clouds floated over us and sometimes hid us, and we were blinded and choked by the drifting particles. I saw men and distant trees as if through a haze, and the shapes of both were exaggerated and distorted. The world was awry.

"Is it not better to fight than to do this, Mr. Ten Broeck?" a boy of sixteen asked of me.

I could not say, as I had not yet fought, but, like the others, I looked eagerly for the enemy, feeling that anything was better than the waiting and vain work that we were doing.

Mr. Monroe, the Secretary of State, who had seen service in the Revolution, a brave little man in a cocked hat and a fine uniform, but no soldier, was there, very much in the way, adding to the confusion of General Winder, our commander in chief, by giving advice, of which we had too much already, and which was bad if taken.

The noises that arose from the field increased in volume and variety. The men talked as they pleased, and, while willing enough to work, received no orders save those which none knew how to obey. The regiments were mixed, and, without intending it, exchanged officers and men with perfect freedom. Sometimes three or four companies were assigned to the same place, and ours received no place at all, but took it. We were mostly farmers and clerks who had never seen war, and we proposed to wage it in a fashion that would astonish all the great generals and make new military books a necessity.

The twilight was coming, and the camp fires flared here and there on the field, their smoky light showing some of the men settling the issue of the battle, while others, fantastic shapes in the dust and dusk, toiled with pick and spade on the earthwork, and a few slept, stretched flat on the bare ground. Around me the sound of human voices did not decrease as the night approached, and I had no wish for sleep, though knowing well the need of it. I had taken my turn at the earthwork, and lay upon the ground, listening to the noises of the camp and watching the fretting army. This was not war as I had pictured it: the ordered march of battalions, each

soldier in his place, knowing his duty and doing it in silence and obedience; but I saw, instead, men ignorant, confused, and wasting their strength, officers who were no officers, and a camp that was not a camp, but merely some thousands of human beings herded together.

The sun had gone down in a blaze of reddish gold behind the western hills and the twilight was deepening into night, heavy, sticky, and hotter than the day, no breath of wind stirring the layers of damp, dusty vapour that we called air. The camp fires rose and increased in number. All around me they twinkled and sent up coils of smoke that thickened and poisoned the already thick and poisonous air.

Coffee and food were served, and sometimes a tumult and a struggle arose over it; the coffee was spilled, soaking into the earth, and the food was trampled and ground into the mud that had formed.

The men still laboured at the earthwork, though in diminished numbers, and the noises began to decrease, part of the army being asleep on the ground, and another part too tired to talk or grumble longer. The fires were sinking, and the dusky rim that encircled the army crept up closer. Seen through the light of the fires it was a grayish, impervious darkness, silent and yet full of threat. I wondered what would come out of its shadow, and if the enemy were marching through it toward us. I put my ear to the earth, thinking I might hear the tread of the advancing regiments, but there was only the noise of our camp.

Some of the lights went out and the darkness invaded the camp itself, but the damp heat, increased by the fires, clung close to the earth and coiled itself around us. I could hear the men gasping for air and cursing because they could not sleep. I, too, tried to sleep, but sleep eluded me, and I stared with aching, dust-burnt eyes over the army that sprawled across the field and into the darkness. I sat up and saw our lawyer-general strid-

ing about, followed by his composite staff, which tangled itself up occasionally with its swords and then swore in wicked variety and profusion. The general visited the earthwork, disapproved of most that had been done, and, ordering it to be done over again, strode back to his tent, with his jingling and composite staff striding after him. Around me fires still flared and the smoke drifted in our faces, the tumult of voices still floated over the field, and from the earthwork came the ring of pick and the rasp of spade.

Some one touched me on the arm and said, "Mr. Ten Broeck." I looked up and saw a tall man in sailor dress, and for a few moments I did not recognise him, but then I knew it was the seaman Patterson, whom we had helped to escape from the Guerriere, but much changed now, for his strength had come back and he looked vigorous and ready.

"I'm glad to see you, Patterson," I said. "What is it?"

"I'm with the marines under Barney back there," he said, "and I'm just returning with a despatch that the commodore sent to the general, and as I saw you sitting here I thought I'd speak to you. I want to tell you to look out for yourself in the battle and after."

"What do you mean by 'after'?"

"That this is not the way to beat the British—not with an army like this."

He hurried on and left me to believe that his words were true and to feel discouragement. I dozed after a while and saw a vapoury field, peopled by ghosts, but I was aroused by a shout and the blare of a thousand voices in excited talk. At the edge of the camp I saw a crowd of men jammed closely together.

"What is it?" I asked of a comrade.

"The President has arrived," he said.

I arose, and, walking toward the crowd, found that he had reported correctly. The President of the United

States had come at midnight to see his army. He rode a gray horse, and was bent at the shoulders; his face was older, more pinched, and more anxious than ever. With him came the Secretary of War, the Secretary of the Navy, and the Attorney-General, and as the Secretary of State was among us already, we had almost an entire Cabinet there to give us advice and tell us how to beat an enemy.

I did not watch them long, nor in truth could I have found much chance to do so had I wished it, for half our army, whole companies leaving their places, swarmed around the President to see him, to hear what he had to say, and, if necessary, to tell him what they thought. I tried again to sleep, and when at last I dozed for the second time all the noises of an army talking at high rate and wandering around its encampment, like wild beasts in a cage, filled my ears. Between half-shut eyelids I could see hundreds of figures moving and bending in the light of the dying fires, and as many others farther away were lost in the thickening darkness.

I was awakened once by an alarm that the British had come, and for awhile we were in a terrible tumult trying to find just where the enemy was and just how we should fight him, but it was only a sentinel firing his gun at a tree, which he had mistaken for the advancing army.

Angry and swearing in tune with a thousand others, I sought my six and a half feet of earth again and stretched myself upon it, to fall asleep anew amid all the tumult of voices and the tread of restless feet. When I awoke the day was shining, the enemy had not yet come, and the army took breakfast, broiling it over the coals or taking it already cooked and cold from pockets and knapsacks, and gnawing with sharp teeth and sharper appetites. Though it was the hottest part of the year, there was some chill in the August dawn, which soon fled before the breakfast fires and the rising sun. I was

eating a piece of bacon when Cyrus Pendleton, in a militia uniform and quivering all over with anger, came to me and said:

"Do you know what we are going to do now, Philip?"

"Fight?"

"Not at all. We are going to have a dress parade and review by the President, and we don't even know where the enemy is and when or where he is going to strike. What an army! What generals! Civilians led by civilians. Five hundred of our old Western Indian fighters could go through them all like wolves through a flock of sheep."

Then he tramped angrily off to pour his disgust into the ears of others. But we had our review, with its evolutions and its new clouds of dust, and the President said it was a brave army, though it was a very tired and noisy one. When it was over I met Bidwell, covered with mud and dust, and far from looking the blossoming dandy who had bade fair to rival Van Steenkerk in time. But our feeling that we were fellow-martyrs made us friends at last, and we consoled together, after which we began to march about again, as if it were our object to make a certain number of circles around Washington within a given time. We did this with great zeal and industry for a day, in order that no strength or spirit might be left in us, and then fell back toward Washington. All the while I knew that the British were somewhere near us, for the crack of a rifle shot would now and then come from the woods, and from the horizon a little puff of smoke would rise, telling us that this was war and not a foot race.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE BLADENSBURG RACES.

JUST as we had finished falling back the news came that the British were marching direct on Bladensburg, and we poured forward again in our old tracks to meet them, covered with sweat and dust and our bones full of the weariness of five days and nights of nearly continuous marching.

"I'll bet you a dollar, Ten Broeck," said Bidwell to me as we tugged and panted in the hot sun, "that when we get to Bladensburg we'll find that it's the only place without its British."

On we went under the hot sky and through the drifting dust, which rasped our throats and filled our eyes and whitened us at last into the semblance of a common uniform. Stray puffs of wind caught up the dust and whirled it about us and over us in vast impenetrable clouds.

We might have been despondent, we might have been weak of heart as well as knee, but we had such good company, for the President and his whole Cabinet galloped along with us, sharing in our sweat, our dust, and our weariness. As we dragged the long, lame line of the army over a little hill we heard the faint crack of scattered rifle shots off Bladensburg way, and on the dusty horizon we could see the smoke. While we listened the shots swelled to a volley and the puffs of smoke gathered into a cloud. This smelled of battle, and we quickened our tired pace. The firing increased, and the rattle

of the rifles was punctuated by the deeper boom of cannon. Bidwell was wrong; Bladensburg was the one place with its British, and I believed that, in truth, we were about to have a battle. So did the others, for many at once undertook its management, and the only thing upon which all agreed was the necessity to hasten on. Amid noise and confusion we broke into a trot, while the sun grew hotter and hotter and the clouds of dust bigger and thicker, hiding from us the smoke-bank over Bladensburg and the flare of the firing there. But nothing could shut out from our ears the incessant crack of the rifles and the rolling crash of the artillery. Sometimes, as the smoke lifted, I could see around me the white faces of the raw civilians, who had never before known anything more formidable than the plough handle or the yardstick, and the talk, the clamour of many voices, sank in a way that was sudden and suggestive.

We knew that some Baltimore troops were already on the field, and it was they who were holding it against the attack of the British army which must prevail soon over men so few in number unless we came up in time to help them.

"Forward!" shouted everybody, and we who had believed an hour ago that we could not walk another step broke into a run, leaving the dust clouds rolling behind us. A cheer from our comrades already on the field saluted us as we rushed forward to join them, and we began to tread upon each other in an effort to find our proper places in the line of battle. The rifles were popping all around us, and a cannon boomed out so suddenly at my side that I jumped into the air. I could see from their white faces that the stomachs of many of the clerks and farmers were growing weak, now that they were to stand in line and face the fire of the enemy.

The smoke clouds were hanging high in the clear hot air, and, being able to breathe at the normal rate again, I looked toward the enemy. In front of us ran the slight

and shallow Eastern Branch, and on the hills beyond it the houses of the shambling village of Bladensburg gleamed through the trees. But the tired little place now saw a martial sight, for the whole British army was marching through it to the attack. I could see them, line after line, in solid, even red ranks, banners aloft, the drums beating the steady rub-a-dub, while the fifes played a shriller tune. The polished bayonets shone in the sunlight, and in front of the squares the sharpshooters lurked among the bushes on the river bank and fired steadily upon us. From these bushes came spouts of flame and the sudden red gleam of a sharpshooter's coat, and above them rose the frequent white puffs of smoke which gathered together higher up and made the cloud-bank.

It was a splendid spectacle, and for a moment my heart stirred at the sight, the first regular army that I had ever seen. These were veterans who had been fighting Napoleon's French in Spain for years, and knew what war was and how to meet it. Then I sickened as I looked around at our own raw levies—good stuff, but untried, unled, half-armed, unfed, and tired to death. Farther off I could see the President himself on horseback looking across the river at the British, and behind him, also on horseback, clustered the Cabinet.

Zip! zip! a bullet knocked up the dust at my feet.

"Stand back there a little, Ten Broeck!" sang out some one; "you're as big as a house and make as good a target!"

I moved the house back, and then a captain ordered us to fire. Crash ran the volley along our line. I sent my bullet into the bushes on the other bank, but whether it hit anything I know not, for the smoke of our volley thickened the air before us and I could not see. Presently the smoke drifted away again, and I could see the red squares in the village pressing on toward the river, while the fire of the sharpshooters in front grew

fiercer and hotter. Bullets began to whistle around us again, and to draw blood and to take life. Our ranks were jostled about, and the orders became mixed and multiplied. We knew but one thing to do, and that was to load and fire as fast as we could. Some forgot to take the ramrods out of their rifles, and they whizzed through the air toward Bladensburg to join the other projectiles, which now formed a steady stream.

We fought with zeal, but without order. The firing was irregular, not by volleys; first a pattering rain of bullets, then the crash of a hundred rifles, and then the rising and falling crackle of gunshots quickly succeeding each other. Men were falling near me, and some were crying out as the bullets struck them, while others took their wounds in silence. Some faces were white, others blood red; what my own was I knew not. I felt at first a strange nervous weakness, an inclination to collapse, as if all the marrow had been taken out of my bones, but as I loaded and fired my rifle and the shouting and roaring of the battle increased it passed away, and a fierce desire to sweep forward with the whole army and overwhelm the enemy took its place.

The air became almost too heavy for breath. The smoke clouds, which hung high when we came upon the field, now lay close to the ground, and great columns and pyramids of dust mingled with them, making us gasp and choke as we fought. Our excited eyes looking through this dull haze magnified and distorted everything. The soldiers in red, seen dimly on the other shore, grew to giants without shape.

We could have seen little in this thickening veil of smoke and dust without the flash of the firing. The points of flame twinkled by hundreds as the rifles were discharged, fused and ran like a sword of light along the front of either army, broadened and deepened here and there by the blaze of a cannon shot. The crash of the rifles and the boom of the cannon had united into a steady

roar, but sometimes the torrent of the shouting swelled above it. We were a new army, and the men found that the battle fever rose with the use of their own voices, and mingled with this shouting, too, we heard sometimes the groans of the wounded. They were thick among us, and the dead lay on the earth, which was wet and soaked with blood. Tiny red streams flowed between the hillocks, and were then trampled into the earth by heavy boots. The reek of the army arose, and the smell of the blood and sweat and wet uniforms offended our nostrils.

I remembered how hot and clammy it was. The banks of smoke and vapour enveloped us like a breath from a prairie fire, and I wiped my dripping face more than once with the sleeve of my coat. Even in the fury of the battle I felt my throat parching for water, and I raised my canteen to my lips and drank deeply. Many others were doing the same. How good it felt as it went down and cut away the coated dust! I shouted with new vigour and loaded and fired my rifle faster than before, aiming merely at the red haze in front and never seeing whether the bullet hit or missed.

My ears were filled with the crackle of the rifles and muskets and the roar of the artillery, but through the smoke and dust I could see that the enemy across the shallow stream was pushing all his forces to the attack. Suddenly he opened fire with Congreve rockets, a missile new to us, which added with their flame and strange shriek to the confusion among the hasty levies. They poured showers of these upon us, and under cover of their fire a heavy red column rushed upon the bridge.

The column advanced at the double quick in beautiful order. Above the crackle of the rifles, the pounding of the artillery, and the hissing of the rockets I could hear the steady beat of their drums and the wailing of the fifes. They were on the bridge now, a solid red mass, rushing forward, the rear ranks pressing on those in front. The artillery and the rifles opened upon them

there, pouring balls and bullets into the solid mass. I could see men falling from the bridge into the shallow stream, which in some places was not deep enough to hide their bodies, and there they lay, their red coats showing above the surface of the water and blazing in the sunshine; others, though dead, were held upright in the solid ranks and were carried on in the rush of their living companions. Behind them their artillery in the village replied to ours, and the air was filled with the hissing and shrieking rockets. The dust trampled up by many men rose in clouds, and mingling with the smoke made a dense, reddish-brown fog bank. Our men, untrained soldiers, excited and eager, were shouting at everything, and the roar of many voices, mingling with the thunder of the cannonade and the musketry, stunned our ears with a tumult that ceased not.

Their sharpshooters swarmed along the river bank, hiding behind bushes, trees, and weeds and crawling in the mud, and their fire was more deadly to us than that of the artillery and rockets. I could hear the whistling of the little bullets all around me, and while we poured our fire into the column on the bridge the fringe of sharpshooters on the bank broadened, crept forward in the mud and water, and avenged their comrades who were falling in the charge. Our raw army, bruised and bleeding, felt the sting of these hornets, and some cried out that we must clear the bushes and weeds of the sharpshooters, but the officers shouted to them to turn all their fire on the bridge. But scattering shots, the eddies from the main current of our fire, were sent at the sharpshooters, and more than one of the crawling forms in red ceased to crawl and lay still forever. I marked a man who was up almost to his waist in the water, ahead of all his comrades, seeking the shelter of a bush or a bunch of weeds, and firing at us from every covert. Presently he straightened up, dropped his rifle, and fell backward, his body disappearing beneath the water. If it came up

again I did not see it, for I turned my eyes to the men upon the bridge—our real danger.

They were halfway across the stream, advancing in solid ranks, shoulder to shoulder, knee to knee—a column that filled the bridge from side to side—and the lifting of the smoke at intervals let me see the faces of the front-rank men, browned most of them by Spanish suns, their eyes gleaming with the excitement which even veterans feel in the charge. Into this solid column of men the bullets were pattering, and a man would fall, to be shoved back by the feet of his companions while another took his place.

“We’ll beat ’em! We’ll beat ’em back!” shouted some one, and the column on the bridge, in truth, was faltering before the fire that was scorching away their front ranks, but at that moment a body of militia just in front of us received a tremendous discharge of the rockets, and began to quiver and reel like one who has suffered a mortal blow. “Run! Run!” shouted somebody among them, and the panic terror in his voice spread like a plague. In a second a hundred were crying “Run! Run!” and these citizen soldiers, confused, filled with dread of things they saw and did not see, staggered back and were lost. Their companies dissolved like a snow-ball before the sun, and by the time we knew what ailed them they were streaming past us, a mob in a panic, a wild riot of terrified fugitives, all order, courage, pride, gone, and only speed to save left.

“Oh, you cowards!” I heard Cyrus Pendleton shout, and then he swore frightfully.

But they were not cowards by nature, they simply did not know better and did not have the soldier’s training. Be that as it may, they were gone, and the shattered columns on the bridge, seeing them go, raised a cheer and came on again, the drums and the fifes playing back their courage. But our companies closed in on the ground that the others had left, and our fire, slack for a

few minutes, increased in vigour. Behind us we heard a great swell in the shouting and were told that it was more of the army arriving on the battlefield, coming in a run many miles under the hot sun and through the thick dust, only to reach us with broken breathing, stiffened knees, dry hot tongues hanging out, and no knowledge of what place to take and none to tell them. Some of the Baltimore militia had come sixteen miles without a rest and were dead on their feet.

But the red columns in front, crumbling before our fire, reeled again and broke to pieces. The companies dissolved, and men hiding among the dense bushes which clothed the banks of the stream were protected from the fire of our artillery, which could not be deflected enough, because of the lay of the ground, to reach them. Then we began to gather more courage and to cheer.

"We may beat 'em yet, Phil," said Cyrus Pendleton.

He was loading and firing a rifle like a sharpshooter. The thick dust had made a mask of his face, but the sweat rolling down it in streams had striped it in such manner that he looked like an Indian in his most hideous war paint.

The fire poured on us from Bladensburg increased. The English, beholding the repulse of their first attack, pushed forward all their artillery and fired with swiftness and precision, while their riflemen swarmed along the river front and seconded the big guns with volleys less noisy but as deadly. Men began to fall rapidly in our ranks, and groans mingled with the multiplied and confusing orders. Faces of farmers and clerks grew white again, and our lines shook and reeled about.

The British suddenly rushed forward a second time in massive columns, re-enforcing the defeated men who were hiding in the bushes, and then burst upon us with the full strength of their army, their batteries playing on our lines at their highest pressure. Again that ter-

rible cry of panic and terror, the worst of all things, rose from our ranks.

"We are beaten!" shouted some one when we were not beaten, but he made it so, for a hundred took up the cry, and a group of riflemen, commanded by our late minister to England, lost their courage and ran away, spreading panic around them. The men of a battery who knew how to shoot, but not to fight, caught the plague of fear, and, throwing down their rammers, competed in the foot race. A terrible tumult, such as I hope never to see again in this world, arose in our army. The mad terror ran from company to company, and the showers of cannon balls, rockets, and rifle bullets falling upon us hastened it and added to the clamour and jumble of the disordered army. Those who ran trampled upon or swept away by force of might those who would stand, and the shouts and commands of the officers were lost amid the more numerous shouts of the men. Some of the officers and some of the men, too, bore themselves with supreme courage, now firing upon the foe who was pressing against us, and then trying to reform our lines and win back the fugitives. One of the wildest and most furious of them all was Cyrus Pendleton, the Indian fighter and fur trader, who, rifle in hand, yelled defiance at the enemy and then reproached the fugitives with their cowardice.

"Stand, men! Stand, in God's name!" he cried. "We can beat 'em! Look, here come the sailors! They'll fight! Don't you see 'em?"

What he said was true, for our best men, the marines and sailors under Barney, who fought then as they fought throughout the war, with disciplined order and unflinching bravery, were just then arriving upon the field and getting into position, even as the rout had already begun. But their steady front had no effect upon the others, for the plague of fear spread by the red rain of the British artillery was eating into the hearts of them all. Away went a Baltimore regiment after the other

fugitives, and in its wild rush I saw the President and his Cabinet caught up by the press of numbers and carried off through no choice of theirs, though it was a lucky chance for them and us.

Fear ran through the ranks like fire in dry grass. Men who had been fighting bravely a minute before were seized with a delirium of terror, and ran, knocking against their comrades in their headlong flight and tripping over the dead and wounded. One squad fired into another squad, taking them for attacking British, but others threw away their arms, their rifles pattering in the dust and mud, and some, to lighten themselves for flight, stripped off their coats and flung them down. They were not soldiers, but civilians, untrained, unled, whose faculties had been mastered by a sudden, unreasoning fear, a conviction that the battle was lost—when, in fact, the time to win it had just come—and they obeyed the only instinct that was left to them—self-preservation.

Unarmed, hatless, coatless, the terrified battalions rushed by, a mob of wild and shouting fugitives. The dust stirred by so many trampling feet rose again in clouds bigger and denser than ever, and hid part of the shame of such a flight, while the British fire scorched the rear of the mob and urged it to greater speed. A wild tumult of shouting rolled over the plain, and the horrible reek of mud and blood and sweat became overpowering.

The sight of all these men, soldiers they called themselves, running so fast and giving themselves up to such an ecstasy of terror had in it something strangely ludicrous. Here was a rich merchant, a man of dignity, running like a boy; and there a lawyer, and yonder a doctor, and the look on their faces, when the dust was not too thick for my eyes to penetrate it, was so wild, so distorted, that they seemed hideous travesties of men. Then, too, they wasted so much strength in shouting and they fell over each other so often that the show be-

came the most amusing I had ever seen. I laughed until I was stopped by the sound of my own voice, which was hysterical, and then I perceived how unnatural my laughter had been and that it was the laugh of tragedy, not of comedy.

I could have cried now with rage as I saw many others crying, and for the moment I knew not what to do; our soldiers were fleeing away like a herd of buffaloes in a panic rushing over a plain, cannon balls and bullets whizzed around us, clouds of smoke and dust drove in our faces, and one who did not wish to run must be in doubt what else to do.

"Let's join the sailors and make a fight of it!" shouted a voice in my rear as a hand fell upon my arm.

I looked around and saw Bidwell, a smoking rifle in his hand, his face covered with dust and grime. But the light of battle was shining in his eyes, and I knew that the lazy dandy had awakened into the man of courage and action. I had been mistaken in him, and I wanted to say so to him then, but there was no time, for we had to make instant choice between joining the sailors, running, or being taken. The British army was almost upon us, and we dashed at full speed toward the sailors, who had stopped on a hilltop and were putting in position a battery of five guns. We saw Cyrus Pendleton on the way swept off his feet by a mass of fugitives, but we gave him a rescuing hand and he ran with us to the battery, where we dropped down behind the guns and began to reload our rifles.

We had a few moments for breath, and I looked at the army streaming in mad haste and terror from the field. We were on a low hilltop, and the fugitives poured around us and by us as if we were a rock in the middle of a torrent. But among the sailors and marines there was perfect order, though they were only four hundred against ten or fifteen times their number, for our army was now disappearing on the Washington road, leaving a

trail of dropped weapons and a vast cloud of hovering dust to mark its flight.

I saw the sailor Patterson at one of the guns, and he noticed me too, for he said:

"We can't beat 'em now, Mr. Ten Broeck, but we'll let 'em know they've had a battle."

The cannoneers were loading their pieces, and for a moment there was a pause in the rush of the battle, while the British prepared to hurl the full strength of their army upon our little force. Far away toward Washington was the immense cloud of dust which rolled over our fleeing men and followed them as a banner of disgrace. About the field lay dead bodies, the enemy's and ours, and some of the hurt sat up and tried to tend their sores.

The British were now abreast of us in the main road, and our commander shouted to the battery to fire. All five guns were discharged at once, and the round shot plunged straight into the solid ranks of the British. I saw their army quiver and give to the shock, but in a moment they recovered and swept upon us in a long and deep semicircular line which threatened to envelop and strangle us.

But the sailors were expert at the guns; they reloaded with incredible speed and poured another deadly volley at close range into the charging ranks. When the smoke lifted we gave a resounding cheer, for their lines had been broken and they were giving ground. I believed then for an instant that we would beat them off, but I saw in the next instant that it was impossible in the face of such numbers.

They reformed their lines and pressed on again in an overwhelming mass, and those of us who had rifles began a fire in their faces which broke holes in their front ranks but could not stop their onward march. The cannon were reloaded, and again our ears trembled with the concussion of the guns as they were fired all to-

gether. Back went the British a second time, leaving their dead and wounded in our front, and a third time they came to the charge only to be driven back as before. The odour of mingled blood and dust and burnt gunpowder arose, but, carried away by zeal and the drunkenness of momentary success, we thought little of it.

After the third repulse they hesitated, then sent a formidable column up a ravine, from which it passed and dividing again assailed us on both flanks and in the rear, while the great force in front of us made its fourth charge at our faces. We were enveloped by fire and steel; the cannon and the rifles flashed in our eyes, the smoke floated over us so thickly that at times it hid our comrades, and as the hostile and overwhelming lines drew more tightly around us I had a curious feeling of strangulation, as if it were my throat and not our company that was compressed. I choked with the dust and the smoke, and then a heavy weight was hurled against me with such violence that at first thought I believed myself to have a fatal wound, but it was only a dead man driven upon me by the cannon ball that had killed him. His blood was over me and mingled with my own sweat and dust, and thus we fought, while the hot sun poured burning rays straight down upon our heads, and the choking clouds of dust and smoke drove in our faces.

Let me say again that our sailors and marines fought here as they always fought, whether on land or sea, with the utmost valour and tenacity. Though pressed now on every side by overwhelming numbers, with the remainder of our army out of sight and rushing, wild with terror, into Washington; with no hope of success, and defeat the only thing sure, they fought on. Such is the result of discipline and training where the material is good.

The solid ranks of the enemy pressed more closely upon us, the dust and smoke clouds thickened. Suddenly our commander went down, badly wounded. Some of those in our front ranks, crushed by the mere weight of

numbers, yielded, and it was plain to all that in a minute or two more our little band would be broken and shattered.

"Come!" shouted Cyrus Pendleton to me. "When it's useless to fight any longer, Philip, it's time to save yourself!"

It was the cautious old Indian fighter, the best of all fighters, the man who never sacrificed anything to false gallantry or bravado, who spoke, and seeing the truth of his words I dashed with him and Bidwell, who appeared just then at our side, at a thin point of the British line. A grenadier, bayonet presented, barred our way. I smashed at his head with a clubbed rifle, and I felt but did not see the blow, for I turned my head away. The fur trader fired a pistol at another, and then, leaping over their bodies, we dashed through the line down the hill and out into the plain beyond. A bullet or two whizzed by us, but in the wild turmoil of flame and dust and smoke and trampling regiments and shouting men we were not noticed more, and, short of breath, we passed off the field in the track of the fleeing army.

"It seems to me that we are running away," said Cyrus Pendleton grimly.

"It looks like it."

Ahead of us were other fleeing forms, and the plain was spotted with discarded rifles. I was oppressed by anger, shame, and grief, and as the fury of the battle died my muscles relaxed and I felt as if I could drop through weariness, but my will bore me on. Now that my back and not my face was turned to the enemy, a breath of that panic that had swept away regiments touched me. I was sure that they were firing at me from behind, and I felt a fierce desire to rush forward at the utmost speed and take myself out of range. My heels were becoming master, and I made an involuntary movement to throw away my rifle to lighten myself and quicken my flight. But I had enough pride and will to rule my heels and to

crush down the sense of fear which overmasters when it is permitted to go far. I restrained my pace to an ordered flight, and kept my weapons for future use.

But the anger and the shame remained. We were now in the trail of the dust cloud that the fugitives had kicked up, and we choked and sputtered and our weariness grew. The sun blazed through the dust, and we seemed to be the chosen focus of his rays. I looked at Cyrus Pendleton and Bidwell. Their tongues were hanging out and their faces were masked in dirt that was wet and sticky with sweat. Overhead the sun grinned at us and poured his hottest beams upon our heads. Behind us the uproar of the battle quickly sank to nothing, and we knew that the sailors left alive had surrendered to overpowering force. The cannon and the rifles echoed for a few moments, and the hum of many voices, the shuffling of feet, the confused clamour of an army, arose in its place, and then, too, died away as we raced on toward Washington.

"Friends," said Bidwell suddenly, "you must stop!"

"Stop!" I said in surprise. "Not now! it's too early!"

"Only a minute or two!"

"What for?"

"To see me die."

We stopped abruptly, appalled at his words, the suddenness of them, the calmness with which they were spoken, but we saw at the first glance that they were true. Death was already upon him or he would not have spoken in such a strange fashion, and I noticed now a deep red blur upon his coat, where the bullet received in the whirlwind of the battle, and perhaps unnoticed at the time, had passed. I was smitten with a sudden great remorse, because I had sneered at him and despised him, and yet when the hour came he had proved himself of the finest and truest steel, and in so doing had lost his life.

I seized him in my arms, for he was about to fall, and bore him to the roadside, intending to put him down there on the grass. But I saw farther away a dense clump of trees, and with an eye to the pursuing British army I hastened to them, carrying the dying man and followed by Cyrus Pendleton, aghast at the fate of Bidwell, to whom he was really attached, and the collapse of his sanguine schemes of grandeur. I hastened into the clump of trees and put Bidwell down upon the grass.

"Thank you, Phil," he said, with his dying breath. "I tried to make a good soldier. I gave the best that was in me."

He spoke true words, for he had given his life. He tried to reach out his hand and I took it, but as I took it he died, and I have never been ashamed of the tear that fell then from my eyes. Mr. Pendleton seemed stupefied, as if his world were coming to an end, but I roused him and told him that we must dispose of Bidwell's body before we could continue our flight to Washington. We could hear the distant cries and tramlings and the scattering shots of the pursuing army, but we knew the way across the fields and through the woods, and I had no fear. A little farther back we found a cabin inhabited by negroes who were frightened to the verge of death and ready to acknowledge the first man who came as their sovereign lord and master. They screamed with fear at the sight of the dead body, but two ten-dollar gold pieces persuaded them to take it, a trust which they kept faithfully, and the mortal remains of poor Bidwell were buried afterward according to the rites of the Church into which he had been born.

Leaving the body there, we continued our flight, oppressed by grief, shame, and anxiety. No man could tell what would happen to Washington. The victors behind were those veterans of whom the Duke of Wellington, their own commander, wrote to the British min-

istry: "It is impossible to describe to you the irregularities and outrages committed by the troops." The men who were with Wellington were the men who were now at Washington.

My first thought was of Marian, and her father told me he would go to her at once in Georgetown. Even as he told me we parted, he to go as he had said he would and take her to safety, and I to go to Washington, where I thought it my duty to be, for even yet I hoped that the army might rally and make some sort of a stand.

I was sore of muscle, wearied by the battle and the flight, the heat and the dust, but I passed on at steady speed, and, entering Washington, saw for the first and last time a city in despair, its people fleeing before a ruthless conqueror, a sight which our country luckily has beheld neither before nor since. My head swam at the confusion and the terror which surged around me. There was not the slightest hope of reforming an army; no army was there, but the air was filled with the screaming of children, the crying of women, the shouting and cursing of men, while the clouds of dust kicked up from the earth half veiled houses and human beings, and the hot glare of the sun beat down on everything. A wounded soldier, a clerk in the Treasury Department whom I had known, sat on the steps of a house tying up his wound with a handkerchief.

"Over the bridge to Virginia, Ten Broeck!" he shouted to me.

He must have recognised me by my size, for my face was encased in dried mud and blood as in a mask. I shook my head, and he said nothing more, but took his own advice and fled toward the bridge, which was crowded with a flying procession in wagons, on horseback, and among them many of the great officials of our nation. The President and his wife had crossed the river in a boat already, Mrs. Madison lingering to the

last to save the famous portrait of Washington in the White House.

The wreck swept on, leaving full evidence of its passage. In the streets lay abandoned guns, pieces of furniture, and broken mirrors, and the stray breezes caught up documents which, for all I knew, may have come from the Capitol itself. Over the bridge thundered the crowd, the tail of it a huddle of frightened negroes, who, after the custom of their race, wept at the top of their voices.

I saw a group of twenty or twenty-five men in uniform; soldiers they were not, for when I asked them to stay and help in a defence they hooted at me and followed at a swift pace in the wake of the fleeing crowd. Dusk was coming on; in the east the twilight was appearing. The beat of flying feet had sunk from thunder into a distant rumble. Those who remained had locked themselves in their houses, doors and windows barred, and the fallen city was about to behold a night of defeat.

G. E. McGraw.

CHAPTER XXIII.

A NIGHT OF DEFEAT.

As the darkness came out of the east and the silence of desolation spread over the doomed city I felt that it was time for me to go. The last straggler was disappearing, a wagon loaded with household goods had just lumbered past me and gone out of sight around a corner; the night was settling down, thick and close, after a hot, burning day. There was nothing that one could do in Washington, and my sole idea then was to go to Georgetown and help in the escape and protection of Marian. I stood in Pennsylvania Avenue, where I had made my last effort to rally some uniformed fugitives. Near me loomed the Capitol, its white walls shining through the advancing dusk. I turned to go, and heard a rattle and a shout and the tread of many feet. Before me blazed the red coats of an English regiment, advancing up the avenue, in but half order, their general, Ross, and the admiral, Cockburn, who commanded the blockading fleet, at their head. Theirs was not the precise, steady walk of the drill ground, of troops under strict discipline, but they came on in irregular lines, shouting and firing stray shots at the silent and unoffending walls of houses. I saw at once that these men, wild and drunk with triumph, were in truth the men of whom Wellington wrote, and less kin to the Puritans of Cromwell than ever. I was about to turn again for retreat another way, when my eye was caught by the figure of an officer riding just behind the British general—a tall man, straight-shouldered, and

riding stiffly. It was my kinsman, Major Northcote, in a brilliant uniform, all his seeming indifference gone, his face red with the flush of victory and gratified malice, as on this, the most triumphant day of his life, he rode toward the Capitol of the country which had injured him and which, I knew now, he hated with as much vindictive passion as the human breast is capable of holding. He fascinated me for the moment as Turnus in the *Æneid* or the Devil in *Paradise Lost* fascinates the reader. The light of the setting sun, reddest as it goes, blazed upon his face, and brought forth like Greek chiselling every strong and sharpened feature—the massive head, the projecting chin, the tight-shut lips, the high cheek bones, the seamed forehead, the thick gray hair above, the whole handsome as ever, but now harsh and repellent.

It was only for the moment that I looked, and then I turned again to flee down a side street. Some of the soldiers saw me and shouted to their comrades to shoot, setting the example by firing point-blank at my vanishing form, and the others followed quickly with a volley. But the twilight had come and the soldiers were unsteady. I heard their bullets whistling around me, but none touched me, and I told Philip Ten Broeck that it was time to show himself a man of speed and sure foot, and so telling I took his advice and darted into the side street. It was well for me that I looked before me, for my eyes were saluted again by a line of red uniforms, and down the side street at a trot came a company of British grenadiers, shouting like their comrades in the avenue and firing at the houses, changing their aim when I came and sending their bullets at me. This way was closed, and I ran back into the avenue, to find the main body of the troops still nearer. Obeying instinct, I ran straight ahead at a great pace and directly toward the Capitol. I would have tried another side street, but I feared that I would dash into a British company, for they seemed to be approaching from almost every direction, and I ran on toward the great

building, which rose white and massive in the misty twilight. More muskets were discharged at me, and the troops shouted in delight like hunters at a fox chase, but I had little fear of their bullets, which struck bushes and houses, but never my body.

I dashed around a little patch of shrubbery, took a few leaps, and was then at the Capitol. I believed that the troops had lost sight of me, and I would hide in the building until the darkest part of the night came, when I would escape to the country. I listened for a moment behind one of the pillars, and then entered the Capitol. Books and parchments were scattered upon the floors, but around me was utter silence, and the darkness of night had gathered already in the lone rooms and halls. On a table in one of the rooms a candle burned dimly. How it came to be lighted I know not, but it sputtered there and threw its flickering flame on the marble walls like one of the torches that some religions burn at the feet of the dead.

When I stepped heavily upon a stone floor the great building rumbled as the echo fled through hall and corridor, and the succeeding silence and desolation oppressed me. I went into the Senate chamber, where I had listened to the eloquence of Mr. Clay urging on the war, and walked down between the rows of deserted desks, some with rolls of papers lying upon them, and faced the Vice-President's chair, sitting there an emblem of emptiness and abandonment. It was now more than twilight in the silent chamber, for within those walls the darkness had come, and it was only my accustomed eyes that enabled me to see; even then the walls and chairs and desks became shadowy, while the feeble rays of light that filtered through the windows made a pallid and ghostly hue where they fell. It was to me a dim chamber of the dead, and my brain was excited with the wild battle and flight of the day, the heat and dust, the shame and disgrace of the rout, and my

presence alone there in that darkening room, from which the rightful occupants had fled. My heart was filled with varying emotions, shame, anger, excitement; my feet became light as air, and my brain swelled with strange ideas. I walked down the aisle and up to the Vice-President's chair, in which I took my seat and faced the empty chairs of the senators.

It was a fine chair, a big chair, but I filled it, for I say again that my brain swelled with the excitement and battle of the day and held strange ideas. I looked down at the rows of silent desks and empty chairs, formless in the dark, and facing me like phantoms, and I trembled with indignation at those who had occupied them and had fled. I threw up my hand, and it struck a gavel on a little marble-topped table by my side. The Vice-President's gavel! He, too, was gone. Then I would wield it for him!

I rapped once, twice, thrice, on the marble table for order. The resonant stone gave back the sound, and the dim chamber echoed with it. The rows of desks, looking more than ever in the thickening dusk like phantoms of men, faced me, ordered and silent.

I rose to my feet, the gavel still in my hand.

"Senators, pillars of your country," I said, speaking clearly and distinctly, "for years we were threatened with war, and we had no recourse but war. Then you brought us war. Is it not so?"

No answer; no dissent.

"Then you brought us war, I say, and you did right; and, still holding the blessings of peace in view, you made no preparations for it. You gave us war, but you denied us an army or arms. Is it not true?"

No answer.

"Does the senator from Massachusetts deny it? He does not? Does the senator from South Carolina deny it? Does the senator from New York deny it? They do not. Then, be it resolved that we are sluggards and

blockheads and unfit for our posts. Does any one oppose the resolution?"

No answer.

"Unanimously adopted. Let it be entered upon the record, Mr. Clerk, that the noble senators, by unanimous resolution, have decided that they are sluggards and blockheads and unfit for their posts. Moreover, gentlemen of the Senate, when the enemy appeared at your gates you organized no resistance, but fled in haste and disgrace from your capital, leaving it to its fate. Therefore, be it resolved, gentlemen of the Senate, that we are cowards, one and all, rank, scurvy cowards. Does any one oppose the resolution?"

No answer.

"Unanimously adopted. Enter it upon the record, Mr. Clerk, that the senators, by unanimous resolution, have decided that they are cowards."

"Present arms! Take aim!"

The command, loud and sharp, came through the windows and recalled me to what was passing outside. I sprang from the chair and running to the window looked out, but I took only one brief look. The British companies were drawn up, muskets presented and aimed at the windows of the Capitol. Between their lines I could see Major Northcote on his horse, his face still flushed with all the joy of insolent triumph, and I knew that he more than any other had helped to guide and lead them there. He had used his time in Washington well for him—too well for us.

"Fire!"

Three hundred muskets were discharged at once, and the bullets smashed into the windows of the Capitol. The glass over my head was shattered into a thousand pieces, and poured down a rain of bits and splinters upon me. The bullets whistled through the air and pattered upon the opposite walls. I remained crouched where I was under the window, for I expected a second volley,

and it came quickly. They were so close that the flame from the muskets seemed to flash in at the windows; the glass left by the first discharge rattled upon the floor, the smoke puffed in, and the whole building resounded and echoed with the volleys. The second discharge was succeeded by a stream of scattering shots, and then I heard them shouting and cursing at the doors and pouring into the building.

I had rushed into the Capitol through instinct, thinking that I might find a safe hiding place for a while in its deserted halls. In the fierce wars of the French Revolution and those that came after, nearly every capital city of Europe had been taken, and always they had been spared. The armies of the French republic and the Napoleonic empire had entered capital after capital on the continent of Europe, and they had harmed none; if Moscow was burned it was not Napoleon's soldiers, but its own inhabitants, who burned it. The English and the Cossacks had been in Paris, and they had left Paris as it was; but when the English, from whom we are descended, entered our new little capital of Washington, just rising from bush and marsh, they raged with the mad lust that savages have for destruction.

As I sprang into one of the halls I saw the soldiers rushing into the building, some with lighted torches in their hands and others firing their muskets at the ceiling, the walls, chandeliers—anything that was large enough to be a target. All were wild with that insane fury which in Malay countries they call running amuck. All were yelling and cursing, and the building resounded with the din and confusion. Outside, their admiral, Cockburn, galloped up and down on a white mare, followed by her foal, a ferocious and ludicrous figure, bellying to his men, egging them on, cursing the building and the nation that had built it. Truly the better England was dead, that night!

I ran down a hall and toward one of the back win-

dows, hoping to escape through it, but some soldiers there blocked my way. The whole building swarmed with them—they were everywhere, shouting and firing pistols and muskets and setting torches to wooden furniture or whatever else inflammable they could find. Twice I saw Major Northcote, torch aloft, and shouting to the men to spare nothing. His seemed to be the most ruthless hand in all that ruthless band. Some of the halls and rooms were as light as day, for in places the interior of the building was already in a bright blaze; in others, which the flames had not yet reached, it was still dark. Columns of smoke poured down the halls, and the crackling of burning material mingled with the shouts and oaths of the troops. In the half light and the savage orgie no one noticed me, though more than once I brushed against the soldiers as I sought some way of escape. All seemed to be closed to me; the British were everywhere in the building, and outside they surrounded it. In the dusk of the dim halls, with the men thinking of nothing but to destroy the senseless wood and stone, I could escape notice, but outside, where so many torches flared and officers and soldiers looked on, they would be sure to mark me the moment I appeared. I felt for the first time a fear for my life, but I did not think of surrender, and had I thought of it, the idea would have been dismissed the next moment, since I could expect no quarter from these men.

The flames were roaring now and licked out at the windows, showers of sparks formed a luminous core for the columns of smoke which poured down the halls, and the snapping and popping were like the incessant crackling of pistol shots. The soldiers, their work well done, were rushing from the building, and I fled alone into a small room, where I paused like a wild beast chased from his lair by fire. I stood there by a window, half strangled by the smoke and scorched by the flying sparks. Behind

me the flames roared, and across at the other wing they shot far up above the roof, casting a wide circuit of light around the burning building. I saw Major Northcote rush out, mount his horse, and ride up by the side of General Ross and Admiral Cockburn. The three sat together for a few moments, on their horses, looking at the flaming Capitol, then they gave commands to the soldiers, who turned about and marched down the avenue toward the White House.

I stood there yet a little longer watching them as they marched, until the crash of falling woodwork behind me said that it was time to go; then, letting myself down from the window, I dropped lightly to the earth outside. I shrank for a little against the wall of the building that I might be protected by its shadow, for there were still straggling soldiers about, drunk with success and more real liquor, firing their muskets and ready for murder.

A light wind was fanning the fire, which was increasing fast, and the walls grew hot. Cinders and half-burned pieces of wood were falling about me, and smoked or burned in the grass where they fell. I made a dash and crossed the circle of light unnoticed. Then, skulking in the darkness behind the houses and patches of bushes, I followed the general direction in which Ross and Cockburn had gone, turning occasionally to look back at the Capitol, now a mass of fire, yet with the white of the marble still gleaming here and there through the sheets of flame. All about it the earth was lighted up, but beyond lay the encircling rim of darkness, and above it the clouds of smoke mingled with other clouds which were drifting across the sky and formed a sombre canopy.

The English were hastening toward the President's house, and in a few minutes I saw columns of flame shooting up from its roof and bursting from the windows, while soldiers carrying loot from the rooms rushed about showing their spoil. Then the torch was set to

the Treasury, and at the same time the flames shot up from the navy yard, where the buildings and the incomplete ship on the dock were burning. All the time the shouting and cursing and indiscriminate firing went on. The soldiers shot at any one they met not wearing their uniform, and I saw a man named Lewis murdered in the street because he rebuked them for savagery. Higher and higher rose the flames from the doomed buildings, and drunken soldiers danced by their light, while others broke down the doors of houses and ransacked them for plunder.

I saw that my curiosity, the strange fascination that this wild scene, smacking of the bloody deeds of antiquity, had for me, had led me again into danger. I had approached too near the avenue, and hearing soldiers shouting in the cross streets behind me, I pushed open the door of a little negro cabin that stood on Pennsylvania Avenue and entered. I had now all my wits about me and knew what I was doing. There was no sign of life in the place, and it was too humble and mean for any one to search there for plunder. In one corner was a ladder leading to a little loft, the eaves of which sloped almost to the ceiling of the first floor. But I went lightly up the ladder, which I pulled into the loft after me, and then I squeezed myself down between the floor and the sloping roof, where I could look out through a little foot-square window, without any glass in it, and see what passed.

The night was far advanced, and yet the soldiers still rioted, their commanders apparently making no effort to restore order, but seeking rather to increase the wildness and savagery of the orgie. What an opportunity it would have been for a little army of our regular troops, which fought so bravely on other fields! All the British forces would have been routed in half an hour. But the thought brought only bitterness and shame, for that little army of regular troops was not there.

The flames from the burning buildings still lighted up Washington, and had it been a solidly built city, instead of a scattered village with a few detached and splendid structures, the whole of it would have been on fire before this. But even as it was the flames were increasing, and the clouds of smoke widened and darkened. There were other clouds, too, piling up in the sky, and a west wind was moaning. The cinders and ashes driven by the gusts were falling everywhere, and a fine gray dust sifted in at my little window and lodged upon my face.

Despite the gigantic bonfires of the burning buildings the night began to grow darker, the moan of the wind grew to a shriek, in the far southwest the clouds were piling up higher and higher—big, black, and threatening. The figures of the rioting soldiers grew shadowy, mere black lines against the fiery background.

My brain still throbbed with excitement, and my hands felt hot to the touch of each other, but I had no thought of rest. I could not have slept if I had tried, and I lay there with my face in the hole in the wall which served as a window and watched, as the sack of the city went on.

The advancing clouds dimmed the light of the fires, the shots became few, then ceased, the figures of the soldiers, save in the brightest light, melted from black lines into nothing, but the clouds of ashes grew thicker. The shouting died, and after it came a stillness broken only by the sweep of the flames and the rush of the wind. I looked up at the sky; not a star, not a strip of moonlight was there; the heavy gray clouds of smoke had gathered against the darker background of other clouds, and through both shone a red gleam from the fires below. The air was dense and heavy, and its closeness, the red-black of the sky, the feeling left by the wild scenes of the night, seemed to portend a convulsion of Nature—an earthquake, perhaps. My own senses were oppressed. Brain and heart felt as if they were clogged up.

The wind was whistling and shrieking around the little cabin. The air grew purer under its breath, and the flames of the burning city bent far over as it swept against them. In the southwest the clouds were of a jetty blackness, but suddenly they parted before a flash of lightning which cut the sky like a sword blade from the centre of the heavens to the earth.

The glare of the lightning upon my eyeballs was so strong that the red gleam in the air lingered after the flash was gone and the clouds had closed again over its track. The rumble of thunder came from the far southwest, and the wind shrieked its delight. The columns of fire bent farther over before its rush, and it seemed to me that ribbons of flame were torn off to float a little in the air and vanish. Toward the burning White House a few distorted figures were yet visible against the red background, but they, too, soon fled after the other soldiers who were seeking shelter.

The thunder began to rumble again and did not cease, but came nearer; the unbroken shriek of the wind was like the wailing of a thousand bagpipes, and drops of cold rain, driven like pistol balls, struck me in the face. The lightning began an incessant play in the heavens, flashing here and reappearing there with such rapidity and intensity that my eyes ached, though I did not cease to look. The raindrops thickened into a shower and then into a steady rush, swept on by the wind. The thunder now cracked and rolled incessantly, and after all the wild events of the day and evening, with the city burning around me, I was beholding at midnight of a hot August night a fierce storm of thunder and lightning, Nature seeming to set her most terrible efforts against those of man. The rain poured as if the bottom of all the clouds had dropped out, and in the street a river of mud and water was running. The buildings burned bravely on for a while, but the flood was too great for the flames, and though they fought long, they began to smoulder at last and then

went out, but left only blackened walls, all else being consumed. The city was then in darkness, save for the light of two or three camp fires which glimmered through the wet and blackness of the storm, and, exhausted with the exertion and excitement of the day and night, though thinking nothing of sleep, I slept.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE RULER OF A NATION.

I WAS awakened the next morning by a report which set every timber of the little cabin in which I slept to shaking, and caused me to spring up with such suddenness that I struck my head against the roof. I could not imagine its cause, nor did I know till long afterward that it was an explosion of some powder in the bottom of a well at the arsenal, into which a British soldier had thrown a lighted match, thinking it was full of water, thus blowing many of his comrades into eternity and frightening the rest so badly that they fled.

While I wondered, I rubbed my limbs, which were stiff and sore, and while I rubbed I longed for food and water. I looked out again from my little window and found that the day was far advanced. The air was clear and warm, the sun was shining brilliantly, and there before me lay the sacked and ruined city, wet with the rain of the night before, the bare walls of the public buildings still smoking.

The soldiers were appearing in the streets bearing plunder and torches, and the work of destruction, stopped once by the night and the rain, was begun again. While I looked the ferocious Admiral Cockburn galloped by, still on his white mare with her foal trotting behind her. He was on his way then to the office of the National Intelligencer, a newspaper that had criticised his ravages in the Chesapeake with severity, but a severity fully warranted by the facts. There he raged with childish sav-

agery, standing by to see that his soldiers destroyed the presses and type, according to his direction, and insisting that not a *C* should escape, "for then the rascals can not any longer abuse my name." After that he mounted his horse again and galloped back through the streets, displaying in his own hands to his admiring officers some articles of value that he had taken from the President's house the night before.

Ross, the general, was raging too, for a hidden sharpshooter had fired at him, and, missing him, had killed his horse. He escaped death there to find it soon afterward in the bullet of another sharpshooter before Baltimore.

Thus, with the commanders and soldiers agreed, they began, and the torch was set to the city again. The fires blazed up anew, and I thought that not a house would be left in Washington, but Nature came to our rescue a second time, as she had come the night before. Surely God was with us! As the fires rose the skies darkened, and again in the southwest the lightning blazed and the thunder rumbled. I had ventured down the ladder in the hope of finding something to eat in the little cabin, and was lucky enough to find a few scraps in a cupboard, which I was devouring with the teeth of a wolf when the hurricane burst upon the city. It had been a thunderstorm the night before; it was a wind-storm now, and each was accompanied by a deluge of rain. The air turned to the darkness of evening, and moaned only as it moans when a hurricane comes.

I heard a smashing and tearing noise above me, and the roof of the cabin, lifted off by the rush of the wind, was whirled away. I was afraid that the whole light structure would fall about my ears, and I ran outside, where pieces of timber dashed past and kept me dodging. Roofs were torn off, flimsy houses were tumbling down, and the troops again were seeking shelter wherever they could find it. With the dusk of twilight prevailing and no soldiers in the streets, it seemed to me a good time to

take the chances of the missiles hurled by the wind, and escape.

My bones ached as I ran, and in a few seconds I was drenched with the rain, but I kept on with a good heart, and, unchallenged by any soldier, passed out of Washington and into the country. I entered the woods first and came then to the river, of which I drank and in which I bathed; then I swam across it, hoping to find our people somewhere on the other side. It was still raining, though the full strength of the hurricane had passed, and the warm soil steamed with the great amount of water that had fallen; my feet sank in the soft earth, and I looked around with a certain despair at the lonely and abandoned country. Cyrus Pendleton undoubtedly had reached Marian in Georgetown, but where they were now was more than I could guess, and finding them looked like a hopeless task. But there was a chance that I might meet some straggler who would give me news of the fugitive Government, and cherishing this belief I plodded on, for it was likely that the fur trader would follow the President.

I was sure of only one thing, and that was the rain; the clouds were without a break, and the rain came down in steady monotonous sheets that gave no promise of ceasing. My spirits assumed the leaden hue of the sky, but at the end of an hour I hailed with the delight of a shipwrecked sailor the distant sight of a figure in the uniform of an American marine. The man seemed to be waiting for me, and I was sure that he had seen me before I saw him. As I approached I recognised him as the sailor Patterson. He held his drawn cutlass in his hand, and his attitude caused me to look more closely at his face, which seemed unnatural.

"It's a lucky chance that you've come, Mr. Ten Broeck," he said. "I want you to be my second."

"Your second?"

"Yes, I'm going to fight a duel."

"With whom?"

"An old friend of mine; he's close by, though he doesn't know I'm here."

It was a flash of intuition that told me the man he meant, and from that moment I was as sure of his identity as if I had seen him myself.

"Some British parties then have crossed the river?" I said.

"Yes, several, but all are small, as they are merely scouting; ours is not fifty yards away, and there are only two in it."

"Lead on then, and I'll follow."

He pushed his way through the bushes, which, soaked with rain, made no noise but a soft rustling as we passed, and in a minute or two we came upon them.

Allyn, formerly of the Guerriere, was standing under the thick boughs of a large tree, and with him was a British grenadier. I suppose they had become separated from a larger detachment and had sought temporary refuge there from the rain. Their hands flew to their weapons as they saw us approach, but I had covered them with my pistol, which had remained dry in its holster, and they desisted.

"You don't know me, Lieutenant Allyn," said Patterson.

"No, I do not," said Allyn.

"I served under you on the Guerriere," said Patterson, "and I have ample cause to remember it. I was about to kill you once, to stab you in the back, but Mr. Ten Broeck here saved your life, and now I'll give you a fair chance for it."

I think he had not recognised me before, as I had been walking through the Virginia mud, and I was covered with it. Now he gave a slight nod.

The sailor told him to draw his sword and fight, and he refused, saying that Patterson was beneath him in rank, whereupon Patterson picked up a handful of mud

and threw it in his face. Then he drew his sword and slashed furiously at the sailor. The grenadier and I stepped to one side, and, in the pouring rain and under the sombre clouds which chased each other in battalions across the sky, the two men fought, each with murder in his heart and furious malice burning in his eye.

I would have stopped it, for I saw that the duel meant death and nothing else, and I did not wish to look on at such things, but it was too late to prevent it now, as to interfere meant only the hampering of one or the other. So the grenadier, who seemed to be a decent fellow, and I drew closer together, following the fight with our eyes as it surged to and fro, forgetting the rain that was drenching us, and that he and I, too, should be enemies.

The sailor carried the heavier weapon, but Allyn's had the advantage of length, and thus they were on equal terms in arms, as they seemed to be in size and strength. At first it was cut and thrust with such rapidity that we could only follow the gleaming of their polished sword blades, but presently each saw that exhaustion would soon follow such efforts, and though their anger did not abate they fought with more caution and steadiness.

Back and forth they tramped over the slippery grass and through the sticky mud. The breath of both came heavily and the sweat appeared upon their faces, which were flushed and drawn, but they fought on, their wet clothes flapping about them and the soft earth trampled into a mire by their feet. The rain did not blow in their faces, but came straight down on their heads and gave no advantage to either. The evening was far advanced, and the light, weakened already by the heavy clouds, was waning. The shadow of the dusk fell on the faces of the duellists.

"Which will win?" asked the grenadier, as he stepped a little closer to me with an instinctive feeling of comradeship.

"An even chance, I would say."

So it seemed to me. The officer drove the man back, and then the man drove the officer back, but the arm and eye of each were still steady. Allyn presently made a swift thrust at the sailor's heart. His blade flicked in like lightning, but the sailor, catching the thrust on his cutlass, turned it aside, and his heavy steel flashed back, to be stopped by a parry of equal swiftness and skill. Then they stood apart for a few moments, still drawing deep breaths, but never taking their eyes off each other. The odds on either were not worth a straw.

They began again, and Allyn sought to keep a greater distance, where the superior length of his blade would avail him against the man whom he had bullied and given often in the old times to the lash. For a while he kept the chance, and a swift thrust of his sword, which Patterson could not parry, drew a few drops of blood from the sailor's arm. Allyn's face showed his savage delight at the red drops, which he took to be the signs of victory. But the sailor was not daunted by the breaking of his skin, and his eyes seemed to grow colder and his arm steadier. His skill with the cutlass was surprising, and the prick in his arm was a spur to him. He shut his teeth now, and, throwing one foot well forward, began to press Allyn with swift blows that the officer needed all his skill for defence to parry, and the blades rang across each other as blow after blow was given and parried and given again.

I saw then that the sailor had been saving his strength and was the stronger and better swordsman of the two, and Allyn himself must have seen it, for his face grew livid and the fear of death appeared in his eye.

Neither spoke a word from the beginning of the battle until its end, and there was no sound in the wet forest save the ring of steel, the shuffling of feet over the soft earth, and the broken breathing of the combatants. Thus they fought in the waning light; and as Allyn gave

back inch by inch before his enemy, the dusk was not too great to keep me from seeing the fear of death grow in his eyes. I felt sorry for the man, in my soul I did, and despite the dangers of the flashing swords I was about to step forward and interfere, but the grenadier himself, Allyn's own man, divining my intention, put his hand on my arm and said:

"You can not; you will merely receive a wound yourself, and give the advantage to one or the other."

Allyn made a desperate thrust at the sailor. It was his last chance, for the blade was turned aside, and the next instant the cutlass reached his heart. He sank down in a heap, dying as he had fought, without a word.

"Good-bye, Mr. Ten Broeck," said the sailor; "I owe you for a favour you did me once, and I wish you luck. Keep straight on five miles, and you will find the Government of the United States in a little tavern in an apple orchard."

He turned to go, but seemed to remember something, and said to the British soldier:

"As for you, you had better follow your army as fast as you can, for it's leaving Washington and hurrying to its ships."

Then he was gone in the forest. I never saw him again, but I heard years afterward of a petty officer of his name who distinguished himself for gallantry again and again aboard the old *Enterprise* in her cruises against the West Indian pirates.

What he said about the English army was true, though we did not know it as a certainty until some time afterward, for its general, Ross, grew alarmed, and his own fears creating an overwhelming hostile force ready to fall upon him and crush him, he fled with his troops from the devastated city, first to Bladensburg, where the dead of both sides yet lay unburied, and, abandoning his wounded there to the care of any Americans that might come, continued his flight with Cockburn to the ships

of the British fleet, leaving behind him a scene of wanton outrage and desolation, a picture of fire and blood which often rises up before an American, however much he may feel his kinship with the English, and however fiercely even then the better England condemned the act.

But of this flight I knew nothing then, save what Patterson had told, and saying to the British soldier that he and I had no quarrel, I suggested that if he would pursue his army I would pursue my Government.

“One death is enough,” he said, and, saluting me, he went southward. I placed Allyn’s hat over his face, certain that some farmer would find him the next day and bury him, and hurried on in the direction Patterson had indicated. I came presently into a sort of road through the forest, and, sure that it was the right way, I followed it with diligence and patience, though the night came in half an hour and the rain never ceased to fall.

It was slow work in the mud and darkness for one who was worn to the bone and near to starvation, but I persevered, and had my reward, for after a long time I saw three or four tiny points of light twinkling through the wet, dark forest, and came presently to an orchard of apple trees, which I knew to be the place designated, for in its centre rose the formless shape of a building of some size. Half a dozen horses hitched to a rail fence neighed as I approached the tavern, or farm house rather, and a man, rushing from some small outbuilding, hailed me in trembling tones, and putting a pistol to my head demanded my name.

“Down with your pistol,” I said; “I’m the American army coming from a glorious field to report a glorious victory to the Government. Is the President in the house there?”

The man laughed in a hysterical way and went with me to the door.

“Yes, he’s in there.”

I pushed open the door, and entering, opposed by no

one, stood in what must have been the chief room of the tavern. It was occupied now by about a dozen men, two or three of whom slept on wooden settees, while the others sat in chairs, their heads leaned against the wall, grim and silent. Most of them wore uniforms spattered with mud. A dim candle burned in a wooden sconce, its flame staggering like the reel of a drunkard, and that was the only light in the room.

In the muddy, brooding man nearest the door I recognised Cyrus Pendleton, new lines added to the multitude that seamed his face, his eyes sunken and lustreless. I walked up and spoke to him, and he shook hands with me, saying that he was glad to see, me, but speaking without surprise or curiosity.

"Marian?" I said.

"In there; safe, but worn out," he replied, nodding toward a door.

"Have you told her of Bidwell?"

"Yes."

I asked no more about Marian just then, but related the sack of the capital and how I had witnessed it.

"What a shame! What a disgrace, Philip!" he said. "With a thousand more regular troops we could have beaten them, but those clerks and farmers had to run away!"

Then his own old spirit flamed up with a suddenness surprising after a depression so great.

"But we'll have other chances, Phil, my lad," he said, "and we'll beat them yet, for with equal leaders and training and arms we're better than they are, man for man, and we've shown it. What's Washington anyway but a village, open to the sea without defences? And what was its taking but a raid of pirates? Never mind, we'll beat them; they haven't met our real soldiers yet."

He talked in this way for some time, but the others paid no heed and seemed to be sunk in the lethargy of exhaustion and despair. I was able to find some food

in the tavern, and when I had eaten it Cyrus Pendleton told me that the President wished to see me.

"Come as you are," he said; "you are not a dandy just now, but neither is the President."

I followed him into an inner room, more brightly lighted than the outer, for it had two tallow candles to the latter's one, though no better off in the matter of furniture. The President sat in a willow rocking chair, his face pale, drawn, and very old. His wife had been dozing on a settee, a piece of ragged carpet serving as a blanket, but she opened her eyes as I entered. Hers was the most spirited and courageous face that I had seen since I left Washington, but she said nothing while I bowed to her and to the President.

"I am glad to see you here and to know that you are safe, Mr. Ten Broeck," said Mr. Madison, speaking with dignity. "Mr. Gallatin is your very good friend; I am too, I hope, and as you have been of some service to us already we want you to do another thing for us, perhaps the greatest of them all."

I bowed and said nothing, waiting for him to continue.

"This raid upon Washington," said the President, speaking with great emphasis, "is not the most important plan of the British. Washington has no military value, and they know they could not hold it even if it had. But they are organizing a far more powerful expedition against a much weaker portion of the country, and it is their object to detach it from the Union and keep it forever. We have positive information on that point from our agents abroad, received only yesterday."

I listened with the deepest attention.

"The British are going to strike at New Orleans," he continued, "and they think of nothing there but success. Along the Canadian border we have powerful armies to face, our troops there will be busy; here in the

Chesapeake and Potomac we have the armies and squadrons of Ross and Cockburn to fight. New Orleans is thousands of miles away from the old and populous portions of the Union. We can send no help from here; it is only the new men beyond the mountains, the Kentuckians and Tennesseans, who can save it. We want them to know of this projected invasion and to meet it. You must start in the morning for Kentucky. I will give you a letter to the Governor of the State, warning him of what we expect, and every hour you save in its delivery will be precious. Can you ride far and fast?"

I bowed and said nothing, but my heart was throbbing at this fresh trust and my eager desire to be with my brethren of the West and meet the new danger.

"The backwoodsmen must be raised," he continued, "and when they are raised you can go with them to New Orleans if you choose."

I would most certainly choose.

"But don't think that you are too important," he continued with a little smile. "You are not the only man to ride toward the Alleghanies with this news, for the more widely it is spread among us the better. You and Mr. Pendleton, who is to go with you, will be the first to start; see that you are the first to arrive. We have some good horses here, choose the best of them in the morning, and when you start your letter will be ready for you."

I bowed again and thanked him for the honour of the mission and his trust in me, and started to leave the room.

"Tell the women of Kentucky," said Mrs. Madison, "that they must send their sons and brothers and husbands to New Orleans to fight for their country. Give them that message from me."

I promised, and hunted a corner in the outer room where I might sleep, feeling so tired that I was forced to leave the preparations for my journey until the morning.

I was not surprised that Cyrus Pendleton should be going with me to the West, for with this new danger menacing us his interest and inclination alike would call him there, but as my eyes closed in slumber I wondered dimly what would become of Marian. I was aroused beyond midnight by an alarm that the British were at hand, and as none knew that it was false the President and his wife fled to a little hovel deep in the forest, where they remained until day.

I was so much worn that I would have taken the chance and remained where I was, but being a messenger now for the West, and of some importance too, I fancied, I felt that I had no right to run the least risk, and I went out again in the wet, soggy night to follow the President to the hovel. I saw Cyrus Pendleton at the door, and beside him the straight, tall figure of a young woman, wrapped in a long, dark cloak. It was Marian. Even had her face been invisible I would have known her.

"Philip," she exclaimed, holding out both her hands. "We did not know what had become of you."

Her voice showed her joy and her eyes shone in the darkness.

I took her warm hands in mine and gave them a strong clasp, even though her father looked on. Time and place were not usual, and one did not expect conventional manners.

"We have been defeated, Marian," I said.

"Yes," she replied with true woman's courage; "but we will fight again and win."

Lucky is a country when it has brave men, but luckier still when it has brave women too.

We followed the President's party to the hovel, and with an eye to the next day I remembered Mr. Madison's permission and took with me one of the best horses that I could find in the orchard. I slept in a little stable near the hovel, and early the next morning the President gave me the letter, bidding me ride fast and well. Cyrus

Pendleton, clad for the journey, appeared, and with him came Marian, dressed too as if for a long ride.

"You see that this is a party of three, and not of two, Philip," she said.

"I think that the lady can ride as well as the men," said the President with his usual tired little smile, "and perhaps she can do as much in Kentucky too as either of you."

Then we mounted and rode away. I looked back once, and saw the President of the United States standing on the muddy ground in front of the miserable little hovel in which he had passed a night of hiding. But the sun of a brilliant day was rising, and its golden radiance clothed the soaked earth and the dripping trees.

CHAPTER XXV.

OVER THE MOUNTAINS.

THE splendour of the sun grew as the day advanced, the earth became dry and firm, and the drops of rain disappeared from the grass and trees. Though it was the time of year for foliage to be turning brown in those latitudes, plentiful rains had preserved the fresh greenness of early summer, and around us we saw the beauty of field and forest, as peaceful and quiet as if no war had been within a thousand miles.

We rode at first almost due west and pressed our horses somewhat from the start, as there was yet danger from skirmishing parties of the British. At noon we stopped for a brief rest, ate of cold food which the provident fur trader had brought, and then turned to the southwest, in order that we might reach the wagon road which passes through Virginia and thence over the Cumberland Mountains to the west. The main road led to the Holston River and Knoxville in Tennessee, but far to the westward a spur turned off from it toward the north, and passing through Cumberland Gap entered Kentucky. It had been the great emigrant trail, but it was now the high road of travel, and it was this northern spur that we three expected to take on our great journey to the West, a road of many hundred miles through the rolling Virginia country, with its red soil and sparse farm houses, then into the higher hills with the farm houses now many miles between, and then over the wilder mountains with no houses at all, save the lone hunter's cabin, beyond which lay the great valley of Kentucky, our destination.

It seemed that fate was with us after so many disasters, for the weather remained dry and fine and the road presented a hard bed, over which we could travel at a swift pace. The scattered farm houses or an occasional tavern furnished us food and shelter for the night, though often we rode late and twice exchanged tired horses for fresh ones, losing every time to the shrewd farmers, but willing to make the sacrifice for the sake of haste.

On we galloped, before us the wilderness, behind us the war. Our knowledge of the latter stopped at the hovel in the forest, beside the door of which we had left the fugitive President. If there was any news since then it lingered behind us, for we travelled fast. What had become of either the President or the British army we knew not, and that part of the war, most likely, would remain unknown to us for many a day; we could only think about it and wonder what the end would be and do our best to suppress our anxiety and suspense.

We had begun our journey in silence and depression, and for the first day no one of the three said much, but the sunshine, the fresh winds, the hope of a great rising beyond the mountains, and our rapid pace kindled anew our spirits and sent the blood in a stronger and swifter current through our veins. Not even the memory of Bidwell's death could prevent the return of buoyancy, though all three mourned him, but by some sort of unconscious substitution I seemed to take his place in the mind of Cyrus Pendleton. He spoke to me in the manner that he had used formerly toward Bidwell, and I was content.

The ground burned our feet and we hastened on. All three of us begrudged every minute wasted, and I recalled all the old stories that I had read in the histories of the fate of nations and how it had turned often on the faith and energy of one man, no more important than myself. Hope had taken the place of depression,

and hope now swelled into enthusiasm. I recalled that at the moment in the Revolution when the fortunes of the patriots had sunk to the lowest the wild backwoodsmen suddenly appeared from beyond the Alleghanies and struck the stunning blow of King's Mountain; and I did not believe that the backwoodsmen, the sons of their fathers, would fail us now at an equal crisis. I knew that beyond the mountains the people were the most American of the Americans, as they are to this day, and as they will ever be, I think; and I knew, moreover, that however rough their manners, however strange they might appear in some things to the people of old countries, they were as sound of morals as they were of body, untouched by hidden sins and the vices of corrupted manners. Against a foreign foe there could be no division of parties among them, and in this particular, as well as the others, they are the same now that they were then, and so they will remain.

As our spirits rose, Marian and I talked much and frequently rode on ahead, Cyrus Pendleton taking no notice, for nearly all the time he was deep in thought, planning, I knew, how to raise troops for the defence of the South, and I never doubted for a moment that he himself would go too, though he had not yet said so in words.

I told again the story of poor Bidwell's death and how gallantly he had fallen, and Marian shed some tears at the story, which I did not begrudge, for it was Bidwell, the playmate, she had known nearly all her life whom she lamented, and not Bidwell the man she loved, for the latter he had never been and I knew could never have been.

The fields meantime passed behind us and the unbroken woods appeared; the houses were a day apart, and the ring of the settler's axe was an unaccustomed sound. Seldom did the smoke from a cabin float over the trees, and one day a deer galloped across the road in front of us. We had begun to ascend the slopes of the Allegha-

nies and were in the wilderness. So vast is our country and so widely scattered are we, lost in its forests and on its prairies, that this now was real, and the scratch of civilization we had left behind but a dream. We sat on our horses at the crest of a peak one evening and looked at the valleys and other peaks beyond, clothed in all the red and gold splendours of the dying sun. We could see many miles, but valley and mountain alike were covered with the unbroken forest. Nature was everywhere, man nowhere; it was the wilderness of old, genuine and true, and I felt a certain awe while Marian repeated the famous lines of our poet:

By midnight moons o'er forest glades,
In vestments for the chase arrayed,
The hunter still pursues the deer,
The hunter and the deer a shade.

Truly the men and women who crossed those vast mountains and entered the dark and limitless forests, with savage and implacable enemies everywhere around them, are the greatest of our heroes, greater than those of any battle. We win our land with our blood; inch by inch we have come from the Atlantic, and inch by inch we go on to the Pacific, watering the soil red as we go and leaving the unbroken trail of our bones. What other nation has won so much and paid so much? Our march goes on now, and it was going on then behind the mountains even while the new nation on the Atlantic was fighting for life against the odds of Europe.

Twice we overtook emigrant trains, people to whom the war was nothing, seeking fresh and rich lands in the West, but after we passed them we were again alone in the wilderness, save that now and then we met the Eastern stagecoach or some solitary horseman. Often at night from the little tavern or farm house in which we slept we heard the cry of the panther in the mountains, like the shriek of a woman, and by day we saw

the deer crashing through the woods. On the higher mountains the foliage was browning already before the breath of late summer, and here and there bits of red and yellow, portending the colours of Indian summer, gleamed on the loftiest peaks like the signal lights of armies.

Day after day we rode on through the wilderness, whose vastness we felt when we knew that the peopled country behind us, the old Thirteen Colonies, was but a narrow strip on its eastern shore. The war was shut out from us, for there could be no war where there was nobody to make it. But as we advanced and passed the backbone of the mountains a double anxiety began to grow upon me—fear that we would not arrive first, and, even should that be done, a fear lest the Western men would reach New Orleans too late.

We passed through Cumberland Gap and thence to the northwest over more mountains clothed in birch and beech and larch and laurel, and approached the great plain of central Kentucky, sinking down now from the mountains like a vast green bowl or basin resting firmly on its limestone base.

Here the dividing line between mountain and plain is abrupt, the former rising up from the latter like a wall, and it was full noonday when we reached the last slope and saw stretched before us the garden of Kentucky, rolling gently away mile after mile, until it was lost under the horizon, a swelling sea, green in the summer but now golden brown, with a touch of autumn; the ripe wheat standing in the fields in rows of little stacks, the colour of gold in the sunshine; the tiny brooks with the fat cattle resting on their banks, flowing in coils of silver; the solid red brick houses, the neat stone fences, the abundance everywhere, the signs of thrift, so unlike the lazy Virginia we had left behind.

This was the land of my birth, the first American outpost beyond the mountains, to the valour and endur-

ance of whose people the country owes all the great Northwest, and to whom, next to the Tennesseans, it owes, too, the saving of the Southwest at New Orleans.

We left the mountains behind us and pressed on with increasing haste as the road grew smoother before us. The Pendletons were going to Lexington, and I was to take a more direct road for Frankfort and the Governor; the time was at hand for us to part, but I secured the chance to say to Marian the words which had been in my mind for days as we rode through the mountains, and which I felt now I had a right to say.

"Marian," I said, "I love you."

Her face flushed the hue of the rose, but she made no answer.

"Marian, I love you; will you marry me?"

"I thought you were going to New Orleans to fight the English."

"So I shall; would you have me stay?"

"No, I would not like you, Philip, if you did not go."

"Then give me my answer."

"When you come back again."

I dared to take her hand and kiss it, after our olden style. When I came back again! I was not afraid, and we rode on through the deepening brown of the summer.

I was the first to reach the Governor with the message that the British were coming with a great force against New Orleans, expecting to take the entire Southwest from us, and after I had received his thanks for diligence I mounted my horse and rode to the southwest to see my father, knowing now that the news of the coming attack on New Orleans would soon spread throughout the West.

It had been four years since I had seen my father or been in Kentucky, but around me everything was the same. To me it seemed old, and I spoke of it as the old land because I had been born there; yet less than forty years ago it had been a wilderness occupied only by the

wild beasts and hunting parties of the Indians. Here, as elsewhere, we had fought for every inch of the soil, and I was treading ground already historic, for every hillside bore the memory of some fierce forest encounter, and though but ten or fifteen may have fought it was as important to them and as dangerous as the battlefield on which a hundred thousand men meet.

I reached my father's house in the middle of the afternoon, and saw him sitting on the front porch smoking his pipe, his gigantic figure, from which I have inherited my own size and strength, at ease in an arm-chair. He was still strong and hearty, though far advanced in years, with hair quite white. He and my mother had not married until late, for the Revolution coming on had claimed eight years of such constant attention from him that he could find no time to marry, and after that he had to come to Kentucky and found a new home before he could claim a wife. So I was the child of their middle years, their only child, and here still lived my father, though my mother's grave was in the garden, marked by a white stone.

We greeted each other with a warm handshake and no more, for we Western people are taught to conceal our emotions, and then when I had rested and seen all the old folks whom I knew we went in to supper, and after that, while we sat on the porch in the twilight, I told him all I knew. He was not surprised at the projected attack upon New Orleans; in truth, he had thought that it would be made sooner, owing to the exposed nature of the town, the foreign character of its people, and its vast distance from the region containing American population in any numbers.

"The Government should have provided for defence there long ago," he said, "but it has been as lax about New Orleans as it has been careless about Washington. If the spirit and foresight of the Government had only equalled the spirit and courage of the people we would

have been victorious always. But it will be different at New Orleans nevertheless. Andrew Jackson will command there."

I had heard of him, a public man of some note, and likewise the brave and alert leader who had taken the Tennessee militia against the powerful confederacy of the Creek Indians, an expedition which Mercer and Courtenay had joined, and before I left Washington I had received a letter from Mercer describing all their battles, and that last terrible one of the Horseshoe Bend, in which the Creek army was annihilated. Yes, I had heard of Jackson, and his name brought confidence. I was glad, moreover, that we Westerners were to be led by a Western man, and success or failure alike would be wholly our own.

"You must go to New Orleans, Philip," said my father. "It is your duty. I should like to go too, but I'm too old to fight, and I can do more good here by sending others. It seems strange to me that England, who should be the best of our friends, is the most bitter of our enemies. She should welcome in us the rise of another Anglo-Saxon nation, but instead she has chosen to persecute us, to tyrannize over us, and to crush us if she can, no matter what the means. No other country has villified us to such an extent, and I think some time, when all the world is against her, as it is sure to be, she will be sorry that in these early days she chose to make us her enemy when we would be her friend, and she will want our help."

He spoke with regret, that lingering affection for the old country which I had noticed so often in the talk of the people of the Revolutionary epoch. I am convinced that the distrust and bitterness with which most of us regard Great Britain dates not from the Revolution but from the war of 1812, and the long period of malignity and oppression immediately preceding it, when the worse England ruled the better.

I spoke of Major Northcote.

"A man of strong qualities perverted," said my father. "He was your mother's distant cousin, a childhood playmate of hers, and was one of the most ardent of the New York Loyalists in the Revolution. Banished from New York at the close of the war, and his property confiscated, he went to Canada with the others, United Empire Loyalists they call themselves, and I do not suppose that this country has a more bitter enemy the world over. You may meet him again at New Orleans, for it is said now that the army which the British have in the Chesapeake will be shipped there."

I remained for some time at home or in the vicinity preparing for the far campaign and inciting and helping others to do likewise. There was no lack of spirit, none could complain of that, for Kentucky and Tennessee blazed up at the news that New Orleans was threatened, and as the Tennesseans, with the help of the Georgians, had recently crushed the great confederacy of the South-western Indians, they were full of spirit for a new campaign against a more powerful foe. It was the same in Kentucky; but Kentucky, though only twenty years a State when the war began and still fresh from its Indian wars, had been sending army after army to the North-western frontier, some of which never came back again, and thus both States were almost stripped of men, of arms, and other military resources. But as the President had said most truly, New Orleans could not save herself, and if she should be saved at all the Kentuckians and the Tennesseans must come. And the spirit was there. In that war we Kentuckians, though, as I have said, but twenty years a State, fought all the way from the north woods of Canada to New Orleans over an arc of two thousand miles, and the Tennesseans were as good. An enemy permanently fortified at the mouth of the Mississippi was what neither could endure, and we had not gone to so much trouble to remove the Spaniard and the Frenchman

to let the Englishman take his place. The wrath aroused by the news of the burning of Washington added a new flame to this spirit, and it was a certainty that the Governor would have men for New Orleans, though it was another thing to arm them and to get them there.

While I helped with the recruits, the news of the glorious victories in the East and North came and inspired us with new ardour for our task. The fleets and armies of Ross and Cochrane had been beaten off before Baltimore; the New Englanders, after their long period of sloth and halfway or whole treason, had shown that they were still of the stern old stuff of the Revolution, and with the aid of some slender companies from New York and Pennsylvania had defeated the best troops of Europe again and again, man for man, on the Canadian frontier; and then, too, came the news that the great invasion from Canada in Burgoyne's old track had been beaten back at Plattsburg, while at the same time our fleet on Lake Champlain had defeated and captured the more numerous fleet of the British. The whole tide of the war changed now was flowing our way, and we rejoiced.

CHAPTER XXVI.

AFLOAT ON THE GREAT RIVERS.

THE forces of the West gradually assumed some sort of shape, and the farm lads composing them were divided into companies with officers who had been their comrades on the farms and whose military knowledge they justly despised. Some of us had uniforms, most of us had none; for arms we brought our own hunting rifles, and to these we added our own powder and lead, as the state could furnish neither. Not much of an armament, the trained soldier of Europe would say, but let it be remembered that above all others in the world, save our brethren of Tennessee, we knew how to shoot straight at the mark we wished to hit.

One can not raise an army in a day, and though the messengers flew and the women, with that spirit which the women of the West have shown always, urged us on, the autumn waned and found us still in Kentucky and unready. All the land resounded with the note of preparation, but many of us had a terrible fear that we would find the British, who could come an easy journey by sea in their big ships, intrenched in New Orleans, and several of us at last obtained permission to go south and join the Tennesseans, who were sure now to start before us, though even after we joined them we would have to come back through Kentucky. In the beginning of November I bade my father farewell, received his command to conduct myself as a gentleman and a soldier, a command given in a low voice and with the moisture in his eyes,

and rode away to the southwest with a troop of my comrades to meet the Tennesseans coming down the Cumberland River.

We rode fast under the gray skies of November and said but little, for I was thinking often of Marian and her answer when I came back again. Would I come back again, and if I came, how?

We reached the hill country in the south of the State through which the Cumberland flows, and there, at a little landing in a wild and almost uninhabited country, found the two flatboats which had been engaged for us. We went upon these, without food and with scanty arms, and awaited the coming of the Tennesseans.

For two days we stayed there in the river in our boats, and the November rains came before the Tennesseans; the skies, which had been dark and threatening when we started, opened and poured upon us one unceasing deluge, from which we sought to protect only our arms and ammunition, for protect ourselves we could not. It was a chill torrent too, and as the raw winds of November drove it more fiercely upon us, some of us shivered in the grip of chills and fever, but none would leave the boats and stay. Luckily we had with us a good supply of the favourite beverage of our State, with which we fought the wet and the cold, and just before noon of the third day we heard the Tennesseans coming.

Though the rain was pouring upon their heads and the wind was cutting their faces, they were singing in the deep-voiced chorus of many hundred men one of their own wild backwoods war songs, and as they swept around a curve and appeared before us in a fleet of boats that covered the river almost from bank to bank they looked as wild as their song sounded. They had not been beautiful at the start hundreds of miles away in Nashville, and since then they had toiled at the boats and sat in the pouring rain until their own mothers would have taken them for savages. Many wore the original dress of the

wilderness hunter, the fringed buckskin hunting shirt, the 'coonskin cap, and the tasseled deerskin leggings, but here they were, bold of spirit and strong of body, embarked upon their voyage of two thousand miles to New Orleans, a journey almost as long as the English themselves would have to take from Europe and ten times more arduous.

We took our places in line with them, receiving a Western welcome as we came, all the warmer for me because there in a boat in the second line I saw the faces of my old and true comrades, Mercer and Courtenay, and at the first chance we gripped hands again and told of our campaigns. They had been with Jackson through the Indian war, and then had come north, intending to join the army on the Niagara frontier, when the news of the expedition against New Orleans reached them at Nashville.

"There'll be a great fight at New Orleans if we get there in time," said Mercer, "for remember it's Andrew Jackson who will lead us."

Then he asked me about Marian, and I told him of her, and was sad a little while for him; though he did not know that I understood.

Courtenay seemed to feel the same confidence in Jackson, and as they had served under him and knew him I began to share it. But we were consumed by a fear that we would not reach New Orleans in time, and another and great trouble was added to it, for I soon discovered that many of the men in the boats had no arms, not even a rifle, trusting that by some good luck they would find weapons awaiting them at New Orleans. Our commander, General Carroll, showed his anxiety in his face, but there was nothing to do save to press on with oar and paddle and current and stout hearts. The rain continued to fall from clouds unbroken by any shaft of blue; from horizon to horizon they rimmed us in, hosts of them, leaden and threatening, and we shivered in the

boats and lay upon our precious powder to keep it dry. The country was wild, sterile, and lonely, and for a day at a time we would see no house, only the dark river flowing on between sombre banks, with the leaden clouds stalking in unbroken regiments across the sky. The water turned from dark blue to lead and from lead to a reddish mud; and now came our compensation, for the peaceful Cumberland, flooded by the heavy rains, was changed to an angry torrent rushing on with doubled current to the Ohio and bearing us at double speed upon its muddy bosom. We forgave the rain, for swiftness was what we wished above all things, and the wild songs of the woods were sung again.

I dreamt a dream the other night,
When all was still and clear,
I dreamt I had a brand new coat
Made out of daddy's old one.

There was no sense in that verse, but it and other such were thundered out many a dark and rainy night as we swept along on the muddy current of rushing rivers. On we went to the north and west across the whole State of Kentucky, and then the stream of the Cumberland bore us into the greater Ohio, and the Ohio took us up and carried us on now to the southwest through rich, flat country, and then into the still greater Mississippi, the Father of Waters, now a vast, muddy ditch, flowing between low, soft banks at which the water is forever eating.

The sun came out here, after days of rain, and, clear and brilliant, shone down upon us. The crisp coolness of early winter drove away the fever and the sick rose from their beds, mostly a blanket on the boat's bottom. But despite the sunshine we floated on through a gray and gloomy country. The banks of the Mississippi below the mouth of the Ohio are not beautiful, with their ragged fringe of bushes and trees and their ugly muddy colour, and the stream itself, a vast expanse of thick

viscous chocolate fluid, offers no charm save that of sombre grandeur. From these miasmatic banks and marshy bottoms the houses flee, and the flowing river took us through the lonely wilderness. As we went on the wilder and more desolate it grew, and, in truth, we would soon be crossing the immense region uninhabited save by a few hunters and Indian traders which stretched between Tennessee and New Orleans. We were Argonauts going to meet a certain foe.

On the second day after leaving the Ohio Courtenay and I were in a boat in the front line, and he suddenly raised his voice and sang out like a sailor:

“Sail ho!”

Far ahead of us, in the middle of the stream, floated a clumsy vessel which looked like a rough imitation of the ark of the Scriptures—a wide, awkward boat, its decks covered with a board roof. It seemed to be lumbering along in the trough of the stream without any definite course, like a drunken man who does not know where he is going.

“A prize!” shouted Courtenay. “A prize for the Captain Kidds of the Mississippi!”

The men in sport took up the cry, for we were young, most of us, many mere boys, and some remarked that the ark must be loaded heavily as she lay deep in the water. The general ordered two or three of our boats to use all the sweeps and paddles available and overtake the strange vessel and see what it was, a command which we obeyed with alacrity, since a chase was an event on those lonely waters.

The prize did not seek to escape us, and when we overhauled her we found that the term we had applied in jest was as true as man ever spoke. A prize she was, the prize of all prizes for us, for she was loaded down with rifles, muskets, and ammunition destined for our forces at New Orleans, shipped at random and without any definite instruction by some lazy State official after the manner of

our State officials. One universal shout of joy went up from that little ragged army of floating backwoodsmen, and the whole of the cargo was divided among them, giving every man a rifle or musket and plenty of powder and ball, with a quickness that would have shamed Captain Kidd aboard the richest treasure ship that he ever took. It may be that our capture of that ark saved—but of that hereafter.

Then forward we went, now fully armed and lighter of heart, on our long journey to the South. We passed the mouths of great rivers, flowing from western regions, which no white man had yet entered, and from the eastern shore, too, stream after stream emptied its torrent into the yellow Mississippi. All were in flood, swelled by the winter rains, and the Mississippi, also, rose with their tribute and overlapped its low banks. Sometimes in the swampy country it spread away to the right and left for miles, until on either side we could see no shore; then it flowed between the soft mud hills again and at night in the darkness we could hear the chunk, chunk of tons of earth falling into deep water as the hills, eaten away at their base, tumbled into the river; then the day would come again and the sun would shine over a yellow, muddy sea, sometimes half covered with bush and trees and roots and other *débris*, brought often from the mountains thousands of miles away. But the current always carried us on toward New Orleans, and we spent part of the days now drilling on the barges and flatboats, forming in little companies and learning how to present our rifles and fire at the word of command.

As we swept Southward the air grew warmer, though the winter was advancing and I perceived now that we were approaching a semitropical region. The vegetation, the colour of everything changed. It was no longer the stern north of a Kentucky winter, which is southern only by comparison with the States farther north, and we were fast approaching the sunny lands of the Gulf coun-

try. Some scrubby trees on the banks of the river were pointed out to us as orange groves, and we saw, too, the live oaks, the clinging moss, and the slimy cypress, proofs of a warm South.

But still there was no news; the world had closed behind us and was unknown before us. We could only guess, until far down in Louisiana we saw a man in a boat fishing near the shore. He was not disturbed by our approach, and did not rouse himself from his half sleep as one of our arks was turned toward him.

"Hallo, there!" shouted the biggest of our Tennesseans.

"Hallo yourself! What do you want?"

"Are the British at New Orleans?"

"Yes."

A chill, a deadly paralysis, fell upon us all. We had come nearly two thousand miles, only to be too late, to find the British already in New Orleans.

"Keep on!" suddenly said the fisherman, dropping his line back into the water. "The British are at New Orleans—before it, but not in it. Go on. Andrew Jackson is waiting for you!"

Again the thundering cheer of two thousand men rose as it had risen when we overtook the boatload of arms, and without another word we turned once more toward New Orleans and pushed on, oar and sweep aiding current.

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE WAY OF ANDREW JACKSON.

WE arrived at the levee in New Orleans on a cool day in the middle of December after more than a month upon the rivers, and I looked with the keenest interest at this old French-Spanish city, but a few years ours and still foreign, for now I had made the semicircle of our great towns from Boston in the Northeast to New Orleans in the Southwest, and all had been much alike, except this, which was different and new to me in everything. I saw before me a broad levee shaded with trees, with the great cross of the cathedral showing beyond, while along the river front rose handsome houses, homes of brick, some several stories high and standing in gardens surrounded by high stone or concrete walls with iron lattice gates. It was green and fresh with the roses blooming in winter, and the houses and the foliage and the perfumes were very welcome to us who had spent many weeks upon swollen and muddy rivers.

There came to meet us a great crowd, dark in complexion, clothed in bright colours, and talking much in foreign languages, and though their speech was strange, the accents were warm and friendly, and we knew that we were welcome. It was the Creole population, the descendants of the French and Spanish, with their many mixtures, who bore themselves in the defence in a manner worthy of the French of Henry of Navarre and the Spanish of Gonsalvo de Cordova. We were not a pretty lot, brown as Indians, in wild attire and plastered with

the mud of the Mississippi, but they received us as if we had come in brand new uniforms covered with gold lace and with bands playing, and our hearts grew warm.

When we disembarked from the boats we fell into line and marched away to our quarters, glad to feel our feet upon earth again, though it is none too solid at New Orleans. Some of the handsome Creole ladies waved fans and bouquets of flowers at us from their little balconies, and more than one lank six-foot Tennessean tried to smile back, but grinned. The Lord knows we were not beautiful, but we did the best we could, and surely woman can ask no more. One of our men had his eyes on a black-haired girl just peeping over the top of her fan when some one on the sidewalk called out to him:

“Keep in your place, you there! Attend to your duty! You’ve come for fighting, not courting!”

I saw well the officer who called out, for he was not six feet from me, a tall, thin old man, with a long, sharp face, over which was spread a network of seams and wrinkles, with a deep cut, as if from a sword, nestling on one side. His chin projected, his complexion was sallow, and a little leather cap did not conceal the mop of iron-gray hair which rose up straight and threatening on his head and seemed to match the fierce bright eyes shaded by heavy brows. His clothing was mean and faded—a short, blue Spanish cloak, tight trousers of which I would have been ashamed, they were so frayed and worn, and high-top boots, rusty and covered with mud.

The Tennessean who had been rebuked was angry. Every Western man is as good as the President and does not like to be abused, and he was about to reply in a manner that would not have been polite, when Courtenay jerked him by the arm and whispered:

“Hush! Not a word! That’s General Jackson!”

When the general came the next day to see his “boy heroes of the Creek war,” as he called Mercer and Courtenay and the others who had been with him in those

campaigns, I was presented to him and at once submitted to the charm and courtliness of his manner, which were so marked, despite his backwoods appearance, as every one who knew him will testify. I am not an unqualified admirer of General Jackson, and I was always for Clay instead of Jackson for the presidency, as I do not believe in electing soldiers to a civilian office, but I think that he represented some of the strongest, sanest, and most moral elements in our population, and at New Orleans he was the right man in the right place—alert, far-seeing, and with the will of the great Napoleon himself. He treated me with much consideration, and asked me some questions.

“You were at Washington, Lieutenant Courtenay tells me,” he said.

“Yes, I fought there.”

“You fought there! I understand there was no fighting at Washington; all running.”

“I stayed with Barney’s marines.”

“They did their duty. I hope that all of us here may do as well.”

With that he dismissed us, and we used a little leisure to wander over the strange, mossy, and beflowered city, with its high-walled and window-barred houses, and to make friends with the lively Creoles and San Domingans who were to fight by our side. But this had to be done quickly, for the British threat was growing more ominous. Their fleet lay at the entrance to Lake Borgne, which is northeast of New Orleans, and a powerful force of barges and launches crossing the lake had already destroyed our six little gunboats in a desperate fight, in which our men, though defeated by overwhelming numbers, behaved with a courage and tenacity which had shown the British that though it was but a few miles to New Orleans it was a long road to travel. But we in the city, who knew the slenderness of the defences and how few were the soldiers, scarcely dared to hope. Coffee’s men

were there, the eight hundred Tennessee Indian fighters whom Jackson had summoned at the first alarm from the Indian country, coming eight hundred miles without a stop, the last hundred and fifty, from Baton Rouge to New Orleans, in two days, a record which, I think, has not been equalled even on the open fields and hard roads of Europe; but even these and Carroll's Tennesseans and the Creoles and the San Domingans and the French refugees and the free blacks made but a few thousand badly armed men against the magnificently equipped fleet, with its twenty thousand soldiers and sailors, which the British had at the entrance to the lake or on it. So I prayed now in my heart for the Kentuckians who were afloat somewhere on the Mississippi, and the general swore at their tardiness with violence and profusion, for he was a very proficient man with oaths, which, I have heard from many authorities, are quite as effective in war as prayer. But neither oaths nor prayers brought the laggard Kentuckians; the muddy river flowed past, but no soldiers came on its current, and there was abuse of my Kentucky brethren, to which I listened not always in silence, for I knew that if they were slow it was not their fault, and I reminded those around me that in all the war Kentucky had given her blood more freely than any other State.

Whether help came or not there were no sluggards in New Orleans, and the work of defence went on by day and by night. At Washington there had been chaos; here were order, discipline, purpose, and I saw that to fight one must have soldiers, and to lead them one must have generals. There was no marching to and fro here, no waste of energy, but each man knew what to do and did it, for infused into all were the spirit and iron will of Jackson, one man dominating an army and a city, filling both with his own courage and energy.

"You should have seen him in the Indian country," said Courtenay to me. "He was sick near to death there,

bent double with terrible internal pains, but he was the general just the same. By day we carried him in an old chair, on which he sat astride with his stomach pressed over the back, for only in that way could he endure his suffering, and at night we bent down a sapling and he hung himself across it and slept by snatches; but whether by day or night he commanded everything and forgot nothing. That is the man who leads us; and we have two armies—ourselves the one, and Jackson the other.”

So we drilled on from day to day, preparing defences, ransacking the town for arms and ammunition, and trying to divine the British plans. It was now that the situation of New Orleans, amid a network of river and swamp and lake and bayou, was its greatest advantage, for the British, despite overwhelming force, were compelled to move slowly, and their fleet, though it had brought the army to Louisiana, could not reach New Orleans. All these things made for time, and time was what we needed most of all things.

On the third day after my arrival I was sent with a small detachment through the woods and swamps and around the great curve of Lake Borgne to see what the British fleet was about. It was a long journey through quaking and malarious swamps and dark wet woods and across creeks and sluggish bayous, but we remembered Coffee's Indian fighters who had marched from Baton Rouge to New Orleans, one hundred and fifty miles, in two days, and at last, well coated with slime and mud, we came out at the southeastern corner of Louisiana and looked at the great British fleet as it lay anchored at the mouth of the lake, which was too shallow for the navigation of the frigates and ships of the line.

We were only six in number, and, having made our way through a marshy stretch of ground to the shore, we lay hidden there in the mud and swamp grass, where we could easily see the fleet of our enemies.

It was the most formidable armament that my eyes

had ever rested upon, and as far as the spy-glass I had brought with me would carry I saw British sails and British sails. There lay the ships in the harbour of Ship Island, in the pass between Ship Island and Cat Island, and on to Chandeleur Island; ships of the line, frigates, sloops, brigs and transports, the Union Jack floating over all—an assembled power which made me sick at heart, remembering the ragged and half-armed little army of a few thousand men which I had left behind.

I put my little telescope to my eyes again and the ships came nearer, I could read their names. There in the centre was the *Tonnant*, a ship of the line of eighty guns, taken from the French by Nelson at the Nile, and over her flew the flag of the commander of the fleet, Vice-Admiral Cochrane, the man who had given the order to lay waste the American coast and destroy every town that could be reached, and had seen it carried out; with him was Admiral Codrington, destined to win fame years after in Navarino Bay. Beside the *Tonnant* lay the *Royal Oak* of seventy-four guns, with another admiral on board; and still farther on the *Ramillies*, a seventy-four, commanded by Sir Thomas Hardy, who received the dying Nelson in his arms at Trafalgar; and then the *Asia* and the *Armide* and the *Sea Horse* of the same size, and more frigates and sloops and transports than I could count. They carried the British, fresh from triumphs in Spain and France, and that army, too, which had made its victorious raid on Washington, expecting to repeat its exploit here.

As I looked my heart swelled with a sense of anger, indignation, and injustice—injustice because everything had been made so easy for them, so hard for us. They had come in overwhelming numbers in their great ships as comfortably as travellers on a pleasure voyage. They were accounted the best troops in Europe, they had served in many campaigns, knew all the tricks and ways of war, and were led by skilled and able generals. We were but

a few, none well armed, some not armed at all, clad, many of us, in our homespun and tanned deerskin, led by generals who had fought only against the Indians and knew no civilized foe, and we had come a vast distance on a journey longer and far harder than theirs to defend the country that was ours.

But there was a sense of anger even greater and beyond that, for in advance they had detached the Southwest from us and made Louisiana a dependency of the British crown. On those ships came a complete staff of civil officials, appointed and classified for the government of Louisiana—so sure were they of its conquest—revenue collectors, clerks, printers, printing presses, stationery marked and stamped, all the paraphernalia of office. A new government, measured, cut to order, ticketed, and pigeonholed had been packed aboard the ships, and there was nothing more to do but to land and set it to working. Castlereagh, the British representative with the allied armies, had said days before in Paris, occupied by the victorious allies: "I expect at this moment that most of the large seaport towns of America are laid in ashes, that we are in possession of New Orleans, and have command of all the rivers of the Mississippi Valley, and that the Americans are now little better than prisoners in their own country." Bonaparte had just been sent to Elba, and the British had been the chief cause of his going there. Flushed with such a triumph, they thought little of the Americans, who were without military resources and had sought to found a peaceful nation. It was the knowledge of such things that made my feelings bitter as I looked at their powerful fleet.

Though December, the sunshine was warm and bright. The water rippled gently away before a light wind from the west in streaks of silver and blue and gold; the white sails of the ships gleamed like snow, rays of sunshine flashed across the red uniforms and gold lace of the officers who walked the decks, and the murmur which many

thousand men always make, even at their quietest, came over the waters to us. Three or four bands were playing too, and theirs were conquering airs.

For over an hour we lay there and watched them, and then we saw many men embarking in boats and launches and passing up the lake, of which they had already obtained command. Boat after boat was filled, and I guessed that it was a movement of importance. One could obtain little information by lying there in the mud, and we rose to retreat, hoping to find some wandering fisherman or hunter who could give us facts worth our knowing.

I suggested to the men that we divide and meet again at a certain spot that we had noticed as we came, about three miles back, as in this manner we would have six chances to one before of finding information, and we soon lost sight of one another among the banks and swamp grass. I turned northward. I was tired of wading in mud and stepping on moss through which my feet went as if it had been thin ice, and the ground seemed to grow firmer as I advanced. I passed out of the swamp and into a belt of thick woods, which I crossed in a few minutes and saw beyond a small clearing with a hut in the centre. This was was the place for my fisherman or hunter; this was sure to be his house, and I might find him at home. I hurried forward, and as I stepped from the trees some one hurled himself upon me. I saw the red of an English uniform, and having no time to draw a weapon, I grasped him by the shoulders, as his body struck me, and threw him into the air with a violent effort of my strength. It was lucky for him that an arm of the marsh protruded into that clearing, for he struck in the soft and oozing mud, squawking like a goose, and stuck there. But when I turned to see if any one else was near I found myself covered by the muskets of four English soldiers.

"You'd better surrender," said one, "or we'll blow your head off."

Certainly they held the advantage, all the advantages in fact; if I had only been a little closer I might have made a fight even against them all, but any hostile movement now was sure death. It was a moment of the bitterest disappointment to me to be caught so in a swamp on a petty scouting expedition, when I had been building great hopes of achievement, but there was nothing to do except to yield.

"Very well, I give up," I said, and I knew I said it sullenly.

"Who are you?" asked the man who had spoken. He seemed to be a sergeant or corporal.

"An American soldier," I replied. I said it with as much dignity as I could muster, though I am afraid my muddy and bedraggled appearance was against me.

"Indeed! You are frank," he said, looking at me in a curious way that I did not understand. "Come into the cabin, the major may want to talk to you."

CHAPTER XXVIII.

SENTENCED.

HE pushed open the door of the hut and entering I stood before my kinsman, Major Gilbert Northcote. I saw the look of surprise upon his face, usually so self-contained, for he could not fail to recognise me despite the mud which incased me like a coat of armour.

"A surprise, but not a pleasant one, Cousin Philip," he said.

"Oh, I can stand it if you can," I replied, and then I was sorry I had made such a reply, for I felt that it was flippant.

"I am not so sure of that," he replied ambiguously.

Since it was my kinsman who was my captor I decided to make myself at home, and looking around saw a box upon which I took my seat. Then I examined the place with interest. As I had guessed at first sight from the outside, it was the hut of a hunter or fisherman, though occupied now by altogether different people, containing only a few articles of furniture, and those of the rudest description. Some tanned skins, jerked meat, and dried vegetables hung on the walls. In the corner was a camp bed, evidently brought from one of the ships for the use of Major Northcote. The major himself was sitting on a camp stool, and I noticed how well he looked. He seemed to have been dwelling in the sunlight of prosperity. His uniform, as usual, was fine and neat, and his expression was at first that of satisfaction and triumph, though it became gloomy as he looked at me.

"I am sorry that you came, Cousin Philip," he said again.

"I observe that you do not seem glad to see me," I replied, and again I felt that I had spoken flippantly.

"There has been bad feeling between us, though I was willing to have it otherwise," he said, "and I would rather this duty had fallen to some one else."

What he said seemed ambiguous and I passed it over, but I added, to see what he would have to say:

"Your friends have a formidable force out there at the entrance to the lake."

His face cleared.

"Yes," he said, "it is quite sufficient, more than sufficient, for the purpose. In a few days, in a week or two at most, New Orleans and all this Southwestern country will be ours. To what do your few thousands of raw militia amount?—to nothing. Was I not at Washington? Did I not see them run away there? They will do the same here! And even if they do not, what does it matter to the gathered might of Britain! Wellington's best troops, the soldiers who beat Napoleon's in Spain and France and marched into Paris, are here, and his best generals are coming too. Do you think that the men who overcame odds at Talavera and Salamanca and Vitoria and Toulouse are going to pause for your Louisianians and Kentuckians and Tennesseans, half-starved backwoodsmen in their hunting shirts?"

His eyes were flashing, and I could see the blood leaping in his face. These were the things that were dear to his heart, the triumphs in which he gloried.

"Look at Washington," he continued. "Your army fled there, and it would have been the same if it had not fled. And do not forget that I had my share of the triumph, nor was it a small share. It was I who led the army to Washington. It was I who made the swift march upon it possible, for I knew the country. I had studied and mapped it, and I led the army on. I urged the

march upon our commanders, and then, when we reached your Capitol, I was one of the first to set the torch to it. I have paid any debts that I may have owed in Washington for insults. But we have not finished yet. Britain has conquered Bonaparte, and now that all her fleets and armies are free she will smash up your league of petty republics and make them her colonies and dependencies again, as they should never have ceased to be."

"Rather a large undertaking," I said.

"Not too large."

"You seem to forget that you are an American yourself."

"Never an American," he replied with energy. "I was born in this country when it was English; English I am, and English I will remain. Have I not paid the price? Have I not clung to my loyalty to my king through everything? I was one of those Loyalist exiles whom they expelled from New York at the close of the war and whose property they confiscated. The mob followed us as we went to the ships and hooted at us and sang their traitorous Yankee songs and stoned us. Those were things to remember, when all we had was taken from us and we were forced to go into the Canada wilderness and snows and build new homes there."

I could see that he was growing excited at the memory of old wrongs cherished through all these years. I had never before seen him show so much feeling, and it seemed that all the passion he had repressed so long was bursting out at once.

"But all this happened before I was born," I protested.

"That does not alter the fact that it happened, nor does it alter the fact either that I am living to see time pay its debts. The exiles, the old Loyalists, will come back to their own."

"Never," I replied; "neither you nor I will ever see that."

"You will not," he said.

There was a change in his tone and manner, and that change, as well as his words, caused me to look at him with a new interest.

"What do you mean?" I asked.

"You are soldier enough to know the fate of taken spies," he replied.

His eye shifted away, and I saw that it was unwilling to meet mine.

"But I am no spy!"

"Why, then, are you in disguise?"

"Disguise?"

"Look at your clothes."

I wore an old suit of brown homespun which I had borrowed from a Tennessean almost as large as myself. I had but one uniform, and as the ladies of New Orleans were handsome I did not wish to spoil it on an expedition through the mud like this.

"Yes, your clothes!" he repeated. "Why were you not in uniform? Why have you dressed in such a manner? Why have you come to such a place if not as a spy? You have been taken within our lines."

I was a scout, not a spy, and had not thought of playing such a part.

"I did not know I was within your lines," I replied, "and if lack of uniform is proof that I am a spy, then half of our army are spies."

I saw his face harden. He seemed to have forgotten all the regard he professed once to have for me.

"I said I was sorry that this duty had fallen upon me," he said.

"Surely you can not mean such a thing," I exclaimed, more in amazement than alarm just then.

"In the rebellion your Washington did not spare André because he was young and many people liked him."

"But at least you will give me a trial and hear what

I have to say," I protested. "You professed once to like me."

"That was in a different time, and the laws of war are plain," he said. "You were caught in citizen's dress within our lines."

Now I understood what the sergeant had meant when he spoke of my frankness, but we Western men were so much accustomed to wearing our every-day dress on campaigns that I had thought nothing of a matter which now seemed so serious.

"It is best to tell you the truth and let you prepare yourself," he said abruptly. "You will be shot at ten o'clock in the morning. That is better than hanging. This room will be your prison to-night. I give you my own quarters. You can not escape, for a dozen soldiers will be on guard outside."

He walked out quickly and slammed the door behind him, leaving me overwhelmed by confused thoughts and yet scarce realizing my position. I could not believe that my career, all my hopes and ambitions were about to come to a sudden end in a black swamp before a file of soldiers, and that too, if not at the hand, at the order of my own kinsman. The thing was too monstrous. I could not believe that he had changed so much, for he seemed sincere once when he offered me what he called a future.

Presently I heard a steady tramp, tramp on the strip of hard earth before the door. I looked through a crack and saw a soldier, musket on shoulder, walking back and forth; I went to the window, another walked there, and I doubted not that there were more, as the major had said. I had no arms, as my captors had taken them from me when they seized me, and I could see no chance of escape.

I sat down on the box and remained motionless a long time. I confess that I was dazed by the blow delivered so suddenly and with such little mercy. At first I had

the feeling that is in every one who is young and full of strength, that he can not die, at least not for scores of years. Death might strike others, but it would pass me by. Even now, after I realized that the major was in earnest, it was hard for me to believe that the threat was real. I was as strong as ever, and life was as sweet. Ten o'clock in the morning! Eighteen, twenty hours at the most! My mind could not take it in, for it was contrary to Nature and would not be permitted. Something would interfere.

I had thought of death before, but only of a death on the battlefield. Even that thought had been vague, merely one of the possibilities, not a probability, to be reckoned with and to prepare for. That, too, was a death not without honour; this to which I was doomed was like the death they inflicted on a criminal, a murderer. I was no spy. All my feelings revolted at the trade. Yet I was not only to be put to death as a spy, but my people, my best friends, my commander, perhaps Marian, would think that I was a spy and died as such.

I sprang up from my stool and walked about in an endeavour to suppress weakness. I looked through the little window, and again caught glimpses of red-coated soldiers. One stopped near the window and I could see his face. It was red and jolly, and spoke of strong, healthy life. Yet that man was twice as old as I. What right had he to live on while I had to die?

I sat down on the stool again. I could still hear, through the thin walls, the regular tramp of the sentinels. Tap-tap, tap-tap went their feet on the earth. Presently the sound of their footsteps ceased and some one fumbled at the door. It was only a soldier with food and drink for me. He put them on my box, and, giving me a sympathetic look, went out.

I turned to the food and was very much surprised to find that I had a good appetite. I ate heartily, and felt better for a while, but not long. The tread of the

sentinels annoyed me. Like the ticking of a clock it seemed to hasten the hours away. The night had come, and already the time had shortened to sixteen, fifteen, fourteen hours, maybe less. What was a little while like that? It would soon be the tenth hour, and then the eighth and the sixth and then the end. Yet, telling about it now at this safe distance of time, I could not even yet believe in my soul that I was going to die, and I suppose that youth, health, and strength together gave me this anchor.

I heard somebody laughing outside. In anger I went to the little window and saw two soldiers talking. It was some joke that they were telling to each other and enjoying, ignorant or careless of the man condemned to death who heard. I wondered at the heartlessness of some human natures. In a pettish kind of wrath I took up the tin cup that held my drinking water and threw it through the window at the men. It struck clanging on the ground, and they went away.

I felt a little glow of triumph at my victory and returned to my box, where I sat for some time. I wanted sleep, and I believe that I could have slept had it not been for the dreary tread of the sentinels. Tap-tap, tap-tap it went, and so it would go on all night I supposed.

The night advanced and I could no longer see anything outside, but I could hear voices and the clank of metal against metal as the men handled their guns. These were the old familiar sounds of my camp life, and I grew incredulous again about the sudden coming of death. I could not reason it out.

The darkness diminished by and by. A few beams of pale light came in at the little window and fell on the floor in front of me. They made round patches there like silver dollars. The moon was rising and the light increased. I looked out again and could see men now as well as hear them, but I did not know what they were about.

I tried at last to go to sleep, and lay down on the floor and shut my eyes. But that only made the tread of the sentinels more distinct. I began to count in order to soothe my brain and put it into a state that would invite sleep. I laughed, still in an unconvinced way, that on the last night of my life I should resort to this old childish trick to banish wakefulness. One, two, three, four I counted and up to a hundred; then back one, two, three, four again. One, two, three, four rang the footsteps of the nearest sentinel as I counted. Unconsciously I began to count the footsteps which were to be the measure of my life. Up to one hundred I went, but I did not turn and go back again. I went on up, reached two hundred, and went on, calling each figure as the sentinel's foot struck the earth.

Still counting, my eyelids drooped and the room grew darker. The hard floor seemed softer and the moonbeams multiplied upon it. The tread of the sentinels became less distinct. Perhaps, after all, they were going to stop. I was too languid to wonder about it long. I tried to count on, but I lost the number. Then I heard the tread no more, and, ceasing to hear, I went to sleep, with the moonbeams falling upon me.

CHAPTER XXIX.

THE NIGHT BATTLE.

It was far in the night when I was awakened by a tall man in uniform, who gave me a rough shake.

"Get up, Philip," said Major Northcote, who held a lantern in his hand.

I rose and in a moment was wide-awake, as a man is likely to be at slight provocation on a night that he fears is going to be his last. Major Northcote carried a lantern, the light of which fell upon his face, and I could see that he was making an effort to preserve his habitual look of pride and indifference.

"I am up; what do you wish?"

"The door is open, and the sentinels are away. *Go!*"

"Then you don't mean to have me shot in the morning?"

"No; I ought to do it, and you deserve it, but I've changed my mind. You can put down that change to what you please; and whatever you please it will probably be wrong. Perhaps I did not intend it in the first place; the old Romans used to put even their own sons to death when they deserved it, but we are not the old Romans; perhaps it was my old liking for you; perhaps my dead cousin, your mother, who was my childhood's playmate, interfered; perhaps it is because you are not worth the trouble, or perhaps a number of things. As I said, you can put it down to any cause or whim you choose."

I judged by his face that he had been having some bad hours, but certainly I was not the one to complain on

that account. There was, too, a certain expression in his eyes as if he were ashamed of himself for some weakness real or fancied. I caught, purposely or not, a little of his own cynical tone and manner.

"I am obliged to you, Cousin Gilbert, for more than I expected," I said.

"You had better go before I change my mind and take the obligation off you."

That in truth would be a calamity, and I started toward the door.

"Shall I have any trouble with the sentinels?" I asked.

"No, they are not there now."

I stopped once at the door and told him I would not forget it, but he turned away impatiently. Then I stepped outside into darkness and freedom. How glorious the cool night air! What a change from eight or ten hours of life to fifty or sixty years maybe! What a magnificent forest out there! Even the swamp was beautiful. I laughed from the mere delight of living, and then crossed the clearing, which, as my kinsman had said truly, contained no sentinels, and entered the forest.

Though the men composing my little detachment had known the country through which we came, and I had been a stranger, I remembered enough of the general direction to reach New Orleans again after two days of hard travelling, and that Southern city, with its gay population, looked very welcome to me after my encounter with death in a black swamp. Despite the landing of the enemy in Louisiana and the imminence of battle, the city was gay in appearance and manner, for winter is the fine season there, and the presence of soldiers, especially young officers, in a town is not always depressing. As I hastened on I saw the handsome black-eyed women in the balconies with coloured Madras kerchiefs tied over their heads, while in the streets lounged the men, dandies after the Parisian custom, their necks inclosed in high collars

with great fluffy cravats rising up and covering their chins, the long sleeves of their coats coming down over their hands and hiding them, the coats fine and brightly coloured, and their legs sunk in great boots with high flaps. Dandies in truth they looked, and dandies they were in some respects, but they were honest and brave men too, and true as steel they were to us in face of all allurements, for the British issued proclamation after proclamation to them—we could pick up their printed circulars anywhere—saying they came not to war against the Louisianians, who would be protected in their homes and property, only against the Americans; but the great promises availed nothing, the Louisianians remained faithful to us, and soon we were to have the final proof.

Dirty and tired as I was, I intended to go to General Jackson's headquarters on Royal Street before seeking rest, food, or cleanliness, for I remembered that I had seen bargeload after bargeload of British troops passing from their fleet down Lake Borgne, and I believed that some formidable blow was menaced. My men continuing their scout, perhaps had not yet arrived in New Orleans, and I might be the first to bring the news of immediate danger. So I hastened through the streets, crossing the deep and miry gutters on narrow planks and sometimes holding my nose as I passed, until I came in sight of the house in which General Jackson lived. Several aides were at the doors, and it was about half past one o'clock of a cool December afternoon, the city looking luminous in the crisp winter sunshine.

I knew one of the aides, and I increased my pace, but before I had taken many steps I slackened it again, for behind me came the thunder of horses' hoofs approaching swiftly. There were other people in the street, some sauntering along merely for air and exercise, but all of us alike turned to see who came so fast. There were three men on horseback, Creoles all, and one of them I knew, a young de Villéré, a member of an old French family who

owned much land about New Orleans. The men were whipping their horses and their faces showed excitement. Villeré was as muddy as I with the black mud of the swamps, but they galloped straight towards the general's headquarters, where Villeré sprang at once from his horse. I knew that these men came so fast on no trifling errand, and I ran to the door.

"The general! The general at once!" said Villeré.

"He is busy," said the adjutant.

"Not too busy to hear that the British army is before the city, advancing in full strength," replied Villeré.

The adjutant looked incredulous at first, but Villeré's face was enough to drive away doubts.

"Come!" he said, and he hurried the three men and me into the house. I think he took me for one of their party; my appearance was sufficient. I had no doubt that the men whom I had seen in the boats formed the army of which Villeré and his comrades had come to tell.

General Jackson was at a table studying reports. He looked shabbier and older and feebler than ever, and his face spoke plainly of illness.

Villeré told the story quickly, and the general listened without any trace of excitement. Villeré and his brothers had been sitting on the piazza of their house beside an orange grove, only a few miles from the city, when English soldiers came from among the orange trees and surrounded them. They were sent to their rooms under guard, but Villeré suddenly ran past the line of sentinels, jumped through a window, dashed across the yard, leaped the fence at one bound, with the musket balls showering around him, and darted across an open field toward a forest, still under fire. He escaped into a swamp and hid in the thick foliage of a cypress tree while his pursuers lumbered by. Then he descended, found a horse and two comrades, and galloped to New Orleans with the news that the British were only six miles away, when

everybody supposed they were a hundred. Who could say now that the Creoles were not faithful to us!

We had been caught napping, but again there was none of that disorder, none of that alarm so manifest at Washington, for we had a different general now. He poured out some wine in decanters and asked each of us to take a glass while he sipped a little himself. Then he said:

“Gentlemen, the British are below; we must fight them to-night.”

There was to be no waiting for the enemy here. We would seek him. I left the building hastily to join my regiment, for I was attached to the Tennesseans. The streets already were filling with excited people, for the news seemed to spread itself. The great bell of the cathedral began to boom, not a melody, but swift heavy strokes, like the peal of cannon, ringing far over the city, which said plainly: “Arm! the enemy is near!”

The women disappeared from the balconies, the children left the streets, aides with messages and orders galloped away from the general's headquarters, the drummers were beating the long roll, and the great bell of the cathedral boomed incessantly. The soldiers began to pour into the Place d'Armes, and so good was the discipline, so severe the training of the iron general, that in twenty minutes from the arrival of Villeré the regulars were in line, every gun and ammunition pouch in place, and after them came quickly the Creoles, the Tennesseans, the free negroes, the San Domingan refugees, and a handful of French exiles, some of them old soldiers of Napoleon, a little army of many races and colours, but animated throughout and fused into a solid mass by the fierce will and courage of the man who commanded. I obtained a rifle from somebody and took my place with Mercer and Courtenay. Thirty minutes after the alarm we were on the march, swift but not hurried, in perfect order, yet but two thousand strong. The fourteen-gun

schooner Carolina had cut loose from her wharf and was dropping down the river in a course parallel to ours.

We marched steadily, about six miles, I should think, down the river, and then, by an old canal, we halted. My place was at the edge of a cypress swamp, half hidden by tropic vegetation, and I could see nothing to tell me what was going on, for none near me knew; but, however long our waiting might be, I believed that it would end in a battle. I had acquired already Mercer's and Courtenay's confidence that Jackson was a general who would always fight.

"What do you see, Felix?" I asked of Courtenay, who stood ten feet from me.

"The cypress swamp, the sky, you, and a few soldiers," he replied.

The twilight deepened fast and turned to darkness, for it was the shortest day of the year but two. Yet we waited and in the dark, some of us knee deep in the black mire of the swamp. The night was gloomy and chilly, and the clouds of fog rolling up from the river mingled with the air and made it heavy, damp, and raw. The wet cold crept into the marrow and we shivered. The sombre clouds stalked in battalions across the dusky sky. Only a few stars twinkled, and those feebly. A little distance away the figures of my comrades became dim and shadowy, and farther on they were invisible. The heavy breathing of the army rose and fell at regular intervals, and there came at times the swish of impatient feet in the mud.

A wall of blackness rose in front of us. Two or three points of light twinkled in it, disappeared, reappeared here and there, and then were gone again. We could hear nothing but ourselves, the flowing of the river, and the rustling of a fitful wind. The banks of fog continued to roll up from the river, and the night grew colder, damper, and heavier.

It is against the principles of war to fight on a dark

night, but it was not Andrew Jackson's way to pay much heed to the authorities, a fact that we had begun to learn. So we trusted him, and were not concerned about the future. Standing there in the mud, the dark, and the cold, and not knowing what was before us nor what we were to do, we carried fewer troubles than at Bladensburg in the full blaze of noonday. I drew my sword from its scabbard—I was an officer now—and held it ready, for I knew that sooner or later we would have work to do in that wall of blackness in front of us.

The sound of a rifle shot came presently from the left, then another, and then a dozen, but they ceased in a moment, and we heard no more, nothing to tell us who fired and who was hurt. The army breathed a little harder, but the waiting began again, and we could hear the rustle of the wind through the foliage, the soft flowing of the river, and the impatient shuffling of the men's feet, and nothing else. Courtenay stepped upon a cypress log.

"What do you see, Felix?" I asked again.

"Nothing new, but the increasing darkness," he replied.

A stern old man passed along our line, and every figure straightened, but there was no other movement. We remained fixed, growing into the earth like saplings, Courtenay said. Twice again we heard distant rifle shots, and knew the skirmishers were doing a little work, but we knew no more. Some of the men had brought food and drink, and they shared it with each other; I took a bite, for at such times one wants all his strength. Lights began to flare in the darkness ahead of us, and the whisper was passed that they were the camp fires of the British.

"We are going to stir 'em up a little, just to show 'em this is not Washington," said Courtenay, "and when we've warned 'em sufficiently we'll draw off."

But the "stirring up" did not seem to hurry itself,

and in order to keep my mind busy I began to count the hostile watch fires gleaming through the night—one, two, three, four, five, six—but soon they became too numerous, and some of them were blurred together. I gave it up, took out my watch, and, by holding it close to my face, was barely able to see the time—half past seven.

“Boom!”

A cannon shot, so close by that it made me jump, rang and echoed through the night, a broad flash of light shooting out at the same instant and quivering on our faces. It came from my right, and I knew in an instant what it was, that the Carolina was beside us in the river and had opened fire on the enemy's position, shown by his watch fires.

A cannon flashed again, and the report was doubled by the silence of the night. By the vivid blaze I could see the schooner in the river, the black figures of men on her deck, and the muddy Mississippi gleaming for an instant like gold in the cannon flare. I moved a little nearer that I might see better, and then the whole ship seemed to break into flames as the fire of gun followed gun, while her spare men aided with a steady discharge of rifles. The blaze never ceased now, and the schooner, with the men working at the guns, and the sharpshooters, rifle at shoulder, were always visible to us.

From the British camp came the answering fire, a mingled discharge of cannon, Congreve rockets, and muskets, all aimed at the little ship, and the air was filled with the red and blue fire of the rockets and the whizzing of missiles. We expected then the word to advance, but it did not come. I saw again, by the light of the cannonade, our stern old general walking up and down the line, but he did not say a word. So we looked and listened, and in distant New Orleans a great crowd of old men, women, and children, gathered in the square before the Statehouse, were listening as we listened, though they could not know what we knew, and could only guess in

their suspense. They had heard the first shot and seen the far flash of the powder, and there they stood, an ever-increasing crowd, filled with dread.

We shuffled about in our impatience. It was a hard thing to remain motionless and behold that flashing tempest, two streams of fire which met halfway and blended and passed almost in front of our faces, though we were out of its course and were yet in the dark. The shouting of men rose and mingled with the crash and rattle of the cannon and rifles, the rockets whizzed and hissed, and the air was full of flame. The ship in the river was a huge core of light, for her crew loaded and fired her guns so fast that their number seemed to double or triple. The rising fog from the river and the smoke of the cannonade added to the night, and made it pitchy dark.

But through this obscurity the fire of the schooner and the British army cut a road, the rival flames meeting and blending halfway. We shuffled about, impatient at mere looking on, and the army began to talk, but we kept our lines and watched the combat, which was waxing in strength and volume.

I lost my anxiety for a while in the grandeur of the sight. The men on the boat were no longer our friends—human beings—but machines working those other machines, the guns. I could see them by the light of the cannon fire, mere shadows of men, a black tracery, Sometimes a few seconds would come between a volley, and the boat would disappear in the darkness, as if the river had swallowed it up; then the cannon would fire and it came back in the centre of the blaze of light as busy and terrible as ever, a live thing that was stinging the British army. There was a great shouting in the British ranks, but on the boat they fought in silence, save the roar of their guns.

“Forward!”

It was our general's command, and with a sigh of relief we left the mire and poured into the road which

ran along the river bank, right under the fire of our own schooner, which flamed and blazed as it passed over our heads.

On we went, with only the light of the cannonade to guide us. Suddenly, before us, I saw the dim outline of the fence and something dark in front of it which looked like a ditch. We checked ourselves with involuntary motion, and at the same instant a blinding stream of light flamed in our faces, followed by the rattle of muskets. Men fell dead in our ranks and others cried aloud in the sudden pain of a wound. By the flash of the musketry I could see the red coats of the English beyond the ditch and fence. We felt that shiver and tremble which comes of a night surprise, and paused a moment before the shock of the volley. Then one of our men, a colonel, ran forward and shouted to the enemy:

“Come out on the open ground and fight like men!”

Whether any one replied I know not, for we began to fire in our turn, and we poured in a discharge so fast and hot that by its light we saw the English leave their post and run. Then we scrambled over the ditch and fence into their place and found ourselves attacked by a strong force of the enemy, coming to the relief of their beaten comrades. The blackness in front of us seemed to burst into a continuous blaze as hundreds of muskets were fired on us at close range, and the deadly showers of lead beat down our lines. A terrible tumult arose. The death cries, the moans of the wounded, mingled with the commands of our officers and confused us all. The muskets continued to flash in our faces and behind us, before us and over us roared the cannonade of the ship and the British camp. We were enveloped in the smoke of our fire and that of our enemies.

“Confound such night fighting!” shouted Mercer in my ear. “The military treatises ought not to allow it. I may get killed here in the dark and never know it.”

The battle grew hotter and our lines thinner, for our

men were falling, but we held our ground. The Tennesseans are a fighting stock, and personal courage and tenacity, not any ordered plan, kept them there, for the rapid fire of our enemies, the shots which seemed to come from every point of the compass, the incessant crackling of the rifles and muskets, the roar of the cannon battle which was going on between the ship and the British, the blackness of the night broken in irregular streaks by the blaze of the firing, made a *mêlée* so confused and terrible that one knew nothing but to stand where he was and shoot straight before him at what he saw or did not see.

My nerves began to quiver. I could not help it, with the roaring and crackling all around me, the alternate blaze of light and the returning darkness, the cries and shouts of which I understood nothing, the thick drifting smoke which stung our eyes and nostrils, and the fall of some dead man against me. Above it all thundered the unceasing cannonade, and looking once at the river I saw that the ship was a tower of light as if she were on fire, though I knew that it was not that, but the unbroken flash of her guns.

Some one raised a cry that the cannon were coming; the fence was dashed down and over it the gunners rushed with two little field pieces which they brought up with a jerk and turned on the column before us. Glorious little cannon they were! I don't know who made them, and I don't know where they are now, but they were thrice welcome comrades in our little band that night, for when they began to talk with the loud emphatic boom! boom! that a cannon uses when it is angry, the hostile column in front of us began to melt away, their line of fire retreated and sank, and in the alternate light and darkness we told each other how brave we were, and asked who were dead, questions soon interrupted by the tramp of many men and horses and the rolling of cannon. A broad red flare, marking the advance of the red-coated English, appeared through the darkness.

"The whole English army's on us!" shouted some one, and it looked as if the truth had been spoken, for they opened such a heavy fire that we were thrown into disorder again and our ranks were riddled. The gunners were shot at the guns, and the long British line, spreading around our flanks, beat upon us from three sides. But the men, though confused and unable to hear the orders in the tumult, again showed their courage and constancy and stood firm upon the ground which they had won. The horses attached to our cannon were wounded, and screaming aloud in fright and pain with a scream far wilder and more terrible than that of man, reared and plunged about in the darkness, tearing up the soft earth with their feet. They overturned one of the cannon and it rolled down into the ditch, sinking deep in the mud. The confusion increased, and we knew nothing amid the shouting. A heavy column of the enemy charged down on our flank straight toward the remaining cannon, bent upon capturing it. Men knew not what to do, and each began to ask his neighbour—evidence of a coming panic. Suddenly the general himself dashed among us, his seamed brown face showing in the battle flare, while he shouted in a voice like the roar of a tempest:

"Save the guns! Save the guns, my boys!"

The men at the guns were marines, trained to fight, and they did not flinch. They leaped down in the ditch, and with brute strength dragged out the cannon and turned it again on the enemy, its comrade assisting. All of us rallied around the general, while re-enforcements came down the road, rushing to our help; greater re-enforcements arrived for the enemy, though we did not know it then; off from the left came the rolling crash of another battle, as Coffee and his Indian fighters—Dirty Shirts we called them because they tramped so far to New Orleans through the mud—had opened fire there, and the strong British force was replying. On the horizon

we could see the flash of their guns, and the tumult swelled and rolled steadily to our ears. Encouraged, we rushed forward upon the enemy, and they came to meet us. Along a long vague line, winding in the darkness through wood and swamp and over canal, the two armies met and mingled in a battle that was without form or order, man against man, weapon against weapon, the British with their bayonets, we with clubbed rifles, and many of the Tennesseans with their long hunting knives. All the wild beast in a man comes out in such a battle as this in the darkness, in the swamp, showers of the slime kicked up by the trampling feet falling back upon you, no orders but to fight and to strike at the man in front of you. Two blind armies locked and writhed in the mud. Sometimes I could see the hot eyes of an enemy gleaming in front of me, but when I struck, the man was gone; again the edge of my sword would meet something, but if I had slain I did not know, and was glad of it. I heard death cries around me, but whether those of friend or enemy no one knew. Bayonet and knife edge flashed in the light of the firing, and steel rang against steel.

Our stubborn line had met another stubborn line; we refused to give backward, so did they, and through all the tumult we could hear our own officers shouting at us, and theirs to them, to destroy the enemy.

Thus in the blur of the night and darkness the battle raged back and forth on the moist plain of the delta. I began to laugh, why I knew not, but I felt a wild exultation; the British boast might be true that theirs were the best troops in Europe, but we would show them, untrained and half-armed backwoodsmen though we were, that they were not the best troops out of Europe, and maybe not so good.

I stumbled into the edge of a cypress swamp and fell my full length. I rose covered with the black slime, and as I dabbed at my eyes to clear them some one shouted in my ear:

“Give it to the Yankee dogs, comrade!”

A half dozen British soldiers were around me, and I blessed the black mud which had disfigured me and made them think me one of them. So I, too, shouted with loudness and vigour to give it to the Yankee dogs, and in my zeal to obey my own command I rushed away from them and in a moment was with my rightful comrades again.

Along our own part of the line the firing had sunk to an intermittent crackle, for it was hand to hand now, and we had no time to reload our pieces. I could hear the dull crash of rifle stock upon human skull and flesh; once something warm and moist flew in my face, and with a shudder of repulsion I wiped it off. The soft mud squirted up under the trampling of heavy feet, the wounded groaned or cried out, and the men who fought swore and yelled, but above all their voices roared the steady thunder of the cannon.

There was a sweep in the wild night battle, something that set the blood tingling, though it made one shudder at the same time, that carried me on with it. But that great crowd back yonder in New Orleans, in the square before the Statehouse—old men, women, and children—could feel none of the feeling that swayed us. Theirs was the painful task of waiting, to stand there through the hours and listen to the thunder of the distant battle and watch its blaze, and not know whether friends were losing or winning.

The battle deepened, and with it the confusion. We made prisoners of our own men, and the British did the like with theirs; in the darkness friend and enemy fought side by side against they knew not whom. The cannon-eers, theirs and ours alike, fired in whatever direction the mouths of the guns had been turned when the battle began.

All this time the fog from the river had been rolling up in dense heavy columns, and now it was banked so

thickly over the plain on which we fought that the flash of the guns could scarcely clear a way through it. The ship suddenly ceased her fire, and the great core of light that she had made on the river went out. The smoke and fog hung heavier and heavier, and the cry ran along our line to cease firing. It seemed to come from British and American officers both, and like two well-proved antagonists we fell apart, each seeking his own ground again. It was time to stop, since in the darkness and the mingling of our lines friend was as likely to fight friend as foe, and for that reason the ship had ceased firing, not knowing now whether she was throwing her balls into their army or ours.

We fell back to our lines, ignorant how many among us had fallen, but elated and full of zeal for the future, for in the wild battle of the night we had fought three times our number of the English and had held them fast; they had not been able to gain an inch; the triumphant parade into New Orleans, of which they had spoken so sanguinely in London, was stopped, and the ready-made and ticketed new government aboard their ships would have to wait a while for something to govern. And the results were even greater than we supposed, for the British, sanguine at first, victories won before the battle, warned by such a reception, rushed now to the other extreme, grew cautious, even timid, magnified our forces tenfold, saw armies that did not exist, earthworks that had not been built, and ditches that had not been dug, all of which gave precious time to us, as the Kentuckians long hoped for, almost despaired of, would soon be at hand to swell our numbers.

I found Mercer and Courtenay, unwounded both, and we threw ourselves upon the muddy ground and sought sleep. The night was cold and a sharp frost formed, but hot with excited blood we did not feel it and slept heavily until awakened to take our turn at the watch. The fires had been lighted and they flared over the plain, across

which the fog-banks still rolled. Beside one of the largest, with its smoke enveloping them at times, sat Jackson, Carroll, Coffee, and other high officers planning for the morrow. By some lay the wounded, over whom surgeons were working, and by others lay the dead, for whom the grave was waiting. Afar the enemy's camp fires too twinkled through the darkness, but no sounds were heard on the plain save the flowing of the river and the occasional cry of a wounded man. Later on shots were fired and alarms were sounded, but it was only those restless fellows, the skirmishers, and the armies settled back and lay still.

Day came at last, with a sharp white frost covering the ground, and then it was wheelbarrows and shovels; we would intrench where we stood, with the shallow old canal, dug long ago by one Rodriguez, across the plain as our front line, and the enemy should not come a foot nearer the city. Then we went to work digging as we had fought the night before, while another schooner that we had, the Louisiana, came down the river to help her sister, the Carolina, which had done such splendid work already.

The fog lifted slowly from the plain and revealed the British camp in our front, and with the light, too, came the people from New Orleans, exulting over the stopping of the enemy, and toiling in the mud with us, even the women handling the shovel and the spade.

"If they only knew how small our army is they could sweep us out of their way with a well-sustained charge," said Courtenay to me.

But they did not know, and General Keane, their commander, was afraid to attack; he was waiting for Pakenham and re-enforcements who were due now, and we looked hourly for the Kentuckians, who were due too, but did not come.

Shovels and wheelbarrows, wheelbarrows and shovels it was throughout the day, and then some one proposed

cotton bales, and these, too, were soon brought and placed in line. Across the plain our intrenchments ran for a mile, and before us the British also were intrenching, placing hogsheads of sugar against our bales of cotton. They were receiving re-enforcements, too, from their ships and were dragging heavy cannon across the delta to reach the Carolina and the Louisiana in the river, which hung on their flank and scorched them with an incessant fire. Not a column could be formed upon the plain in the face of the fire of these terrible schooners, and not a man who worked on their intrenchments was safe for a moment from their balls. An entire army of many thousands was besieged by two little schooners carrying scarcely two hundred men. Behind the protecting veil of their fire we worked at our defences and prayed for time, that the Kentuckians might come to our help.

Those were days of danger, excitement, and, for me, a certain exhilaration too. I had witnessed the great disgrace of Washington, and the spirit here was so different that I thrilled with enthusiasm. I toiled at ditch and breastwork with the rest, and ate with sharp appetite the food which the people of New Orleans brought to us. God bless their Creole souls! We must never forget that in all this time they were among the bravest and most faithful.

In the British camp they toiled too, tried to devise some shelter from the scorching fire of the schooners, and hastened forward the heavy cannon with which they intended to destroy them. Christmas morning came, clear, bright, frosty, but not like our snowy holidays of the North, where, even in Kentucky, zero often comes knocking at your door, and you can draw close to the glowing coals as you drink your eggnog. On that morning some of us scouting and skirmishing heard a great shouting in the British camp, and we thought they must be taking their Christmas very well indeed, but they were rejoicing over the arrival of their commander in chief, General Sir Ed-

ward Pakenham, son of the Earl of Longford, hero of Salamanca, brother-in-law of the Duke of Wellington, and his favourite officer. With him came more reinforcements and the man who was to be his second in command. Their camp was now full of generals and baronets and their troops outnumbered ours three to one. We looked longingly for our Kentuckians, but the muddy Mississippi did not bring them.

CHAPTER XXX.

AT BAY.

WE waited for our enemy to strike, and now he was about to do it, for on the second night after Christmas Day he got his great guns in position and opened fire on our exasperating little schooners which had been stinging him like wasps.

The Louisiana, lying much farther up stream, was not attacked for the present, but her comrade, the Carolina, being closer inshore where the current was swifter, could not make head against the stream and was forced to lie there under the fire of all the battery.

It was about dawn of day when twelve heavy guns opened fire upon the little schooner, and the long thundering roll of the first discharge drew us all to our intrenchments. There we lined the earthwork and watched the encounter, while the general himself, from the second story of the house among the trees, levelled on the combatants an old telescope borrowed from a Frenchman. The English were firing balls heated white hot at the Carolina with the intention of blowing her up, and the schooner had only a single long twelve with which she could reply, but it was loaded and fired so fast that the men in the English battery knew they had something to fight. Mercer, Courtenay, and I were together lying against the little wall of soft earth, with our eyes peeping over.

"It can't last long," said Courtenay. "One gun against a dozen, and heavier ones at that, can't win."

But that one gun was served with speed and courage,

and for a half hour the thousands on either side stood there and watched and listened. We could do nothing to help our little ship, and perforce we waited while she made her fight against overwhelming odds—a gallant fight, but still a losing one. The smoke rose high over her and drifted off in broad clouds under the sun, while we cheered with tremendous spirit when the schooner now and then drove the British gunners to shelter under the levee; but presently a bright flame shot up from her timbers, and all the efforts of her men could not check it. Higher the flames rose; we could see plainly that they were eating their way to the heart of the ship, and that her crew could not fight the overwhelming battery and the rising fire at the same time.

“Five minutes now,” said Courtenay, “and then good-bye to the Carolina; she’s a brave little ship and she’s done her work well.”

He was a true prophet accepted by his time, for the British guns were pouring hot shot in such quantities upon the Carolina that all her timbers burst into flames, and the crew, abandoning her, escaped to the shore. The fire of the British battery and the shouts of the two armies ceased, and for a moment or two silence seemed to hold the plain which had just been resounding with cannon shots and the cheers of thousands. All expected the same thing, and all watched the burning schooner as the flames wrapped her around until she glowed like the inside of a spouting volcano; then she seemed to fall apart, a streak of deeper red appeared in the heart of the fire, and the Carolina, lifted bodily from the water, flew into a million hissing and smoking fragments hurled high in the air, as the ground beneath us trembled under the crash of the exploding magazine. Burning pieces fell on the Louisiana a mile away, and the plain was littered with them. The English raised a tremendous cheer as the fabric of the schooner which had scorched them for four days sank in the Mississippi, and we felt downcast and

gloomy over the loss of our faithful little ally; in New Orleans, too, they heard it, guessed what it was, and the same sadness was felt there.

But it was only for a minute or two that the English gunners stopped; then they turned their fire on the Louisiana farther away, but her crew, with oars and sweeps, were able to take her up the stream beyond the range of the great guns, and when we saw her creeping foot by foot out of danger until the balls could not reach her, then we too cheered and felt that the triumph was not all on one side. Moreover, the crew of the Carolina, trained artillerymen, came to help us with the land guns. The Baratarians had arrived, too, under Dominique You and Belouche, and brown-faced and red-shirted, looking like the pirates they were, they were placed at the twenty-four-pounders. Our lines were ready now, the cannon, a long row of wide muzzles, looked over the earthworks, the Louisiana had dropped down the river again that she might fire from our flank, and we awaited the advance of the enemy. We knew that the waiting would not be long, for they were massed heavily in front of us, and our scouts and spies said that all their batteries were in position.

That night the guards were doubled, and even in the dark no movement on the plain escaped their attention. All through the dusk men tramped to and fro, and some still worked at the intrenchments. There was no doubt now where the decision would come. It would be somewhere on that narrow space between those two rows of breastworks over which the cannon faced and threatened each other. Our army was gathered behind one and the British army behind the other, while their ships, far away at the entrance to Lake Borgne, could not reach us and had not dared to try the Mississippi.

Morning came, the fine winter morning of the Gulf coast; the fog and the grayness in the air had gone. The sky was a dome of blue velvet; the sunshine clothed

the earth, and the muddy river turned to gold. In the trees that scattered the plain the ricebird and the mocking bird, careless or ignorant of armies, were singing. I went beyond our breastworks, taking with me the spy-glass which I had used on our scout, and lying behind a hillock I levelled it on the British works. A great bustle was going on there, and I saw many men moving about. One of them stepped upon the breastwork presently and studied our lines through a glass. He was a large man of erect, soldierly figure, and I quickly recognised Major Northcote. He risked his life from our sharpshooters in the plain every moment he spent there, but none fired and he took his time, as if he were in his own house; indeed, I think that fear had no part in the man's composition. After a survey of two or three minutes he stepped back and disappeared.

Again I noticed that curious sinking of sound, the sudden silence which so often precedes a tumult, and then a single cannon of theirs near the levee boomed. The report and the rising smoke seemed to serve as a signal, for a whole battery crashed at once, and in a moment the British line along all its front was blazing fire and hurling lead at us, while the Congreve rockets, of which they seemed so fond, were filling the air with changing flames. Field batteries, too, were advancing upon us, firing as they came, but we soon saw that they were wasting lead, for it fell short and we were not hurt. I had seen enough of war now to know that this must be a mask for some other movement, and presently we beheld their army coming in heavy columns, though half sheltered by some houses. They made a brave sight in red, gray, green, and tartan, and they bore themselves as bravely as they looked, for I do not attack the courage of the English soldiers, which has been shown upon so many fields and in so many countries. Their bands were playing, but could scarcely be heard in the thunder of the cannonade.

On they came, and presently the guns along our line

opened upon them. We have always excelled in marksmanship, whether with cannon or rifles, and the balls began to break into these resplendent squares, to hurl them back upon each other, and to smash them up. They were nearer now and the riflemen could reach them, their bullets sang like a tempest of hail swept on by the wind and the British squares reeled back. The houses caught fire, and torrents of flame and smoke gushed from them. The balls from the Louisiana crossed the plain and swept the advancing columns with a flanking fire. The British lines were crumbling away, some of the cannon in their batteries were knocked to pieces, and before their charge was really begun the bugles sounded the retiring notes and they drew off the field to the protection of their own lines and intrenchments. It was but a demonstration, a skirmish, to feel of us, and I do not think they liked the feeling. Then we toiled again at our breastwork, exulting over our little victories, and waiting to see what the enemy would do next.

The last three days of the year passed and the new year of 1815 began, and meantime the enemy had been as busy as we, strengthening his works and dragging from his ships his heaviest guns that he might batter us down. I went back to New Orleans to obtain a supply of powder brought in from the country and found the little city a strange mixture of fear and gayety—fear lest we should be beaten in the end, gayety over the successes we had won so far. The natural lightness and good humour of the people too came to their aid, and added to it was the enthusiasm aroused by the undoubted zeal and courage of the Creoles already so nobly displayed. But I could hear nothing of the Kentuckians. Would they ever come? The old Mississippi forever flowed past, but it did not bring them, and without them we could scarcely hope to win.

Then I was back again in our lines, where I worked with the spade, skirmished, ate, and slept. I was be-

ginning to feel like an old soldier now, and the incessant picket firing had grown so much a thing of the common that I ceased to pay attention to it unless the bullets were coming my way. On the afternoon of the last day of the year the British planted a battery near a swamp and proceeded to make a great noise, which they kept up until sunset.

The night was the darkest that we had seen yet, and eyes being of little use we had recourse to our ears, though we heard nothing over the British way but a dull hammering, which continued all night long, and the meaning of which we could not guess.

The day came, but it brought with it a fog so thick and heavy that we could not see twenty feet before us. It seemed to roll up from the river in huge waves like the breakers of the sea, and it was so thick that I felt as if I could grasp it by handfuls. A pale glimmer of the sun shone through it, and, as in the darkness of the night, the hammering in front of us went on and we could not know what it meant.

"It's some mischief—sure to be," said Courtenay as we drank coffee together.

That he was right I had no doubt, but eight o'clock came and the fog still enveloped both armies and the space between; then nine o'clock and it still clothed us, dense, impenetrable, while through it came the steady hammering and beating, and even the hum of men's voices.

"One can't do anything in this fog," I said to Courtenay; "we might as well quit work and take a day of play."

Our commanders seemed to think so too, for the Louisiana remained at her anchorage and the general planned a review of the troops between his headquarters and the lines when the fog should lift sufficiently.

Ten o'clock came, and many of us had put down our arms and were at ease. The fog bank began to rise, lift-

ing itself up by inches, as if it were a task of slowness, but suddenly changing its mind it rolled away from the plain like the folding back of a huge blanket. Then we beheld the cause of the ceaseless hammering; a new battery of thirty of their heaviest guns, brought from the ships, and planted where they would command our lines. Moreover, their regiments, dressed as if for a holiday parade, were deployed for battle, and the mounted officers were galloping about with orders. The bands began to play, and their gaudy battle flags broke out. It was like the raising of a curtain at a theatre, the sudden replacing of the fog by a brilliant, luminous light in which everything could now be seen, and the whole army drawn up for battle. But we had only a minute to look, for some one gave a signal and their thirty heavy cannon crashed at once; again the air was filled with the red glare and scream of the rockets, the leaden tempest was poured upon us, and in an incredibly brief space clouds of smoke obscured the plain. Now we saw why that hammering had gone on so persistently night and day in the dense fog, and I will confess that we were taken by surprise as the great guns of the enemy drove their deadly storm upon us. Within our lines stood a large square house, occupied by the general as his headquarters, and the British seemed to know it, as the fire of their guns was hurled for a while directly against it. Well aimed they were too, for cannon ball after cannon ball smashed into it. The roof was knocked to pieces, the portico came tumbling down, the walls were beaten in, and the officers who were there rushed out for their lives—one, the chief of staff, a fellow-Kentuckian, covered with rubbish.

Clamour and confusion arose within our lines, and there was a great tumult of men running—running, aye, running! but running to the guns, from which they had been drawn by the fog and our belief that there would be no fight that day. Order, not disorder, showing the

master hand and iron will over us, prevailed, and for ten minutes we endured the tempest of English iron, while our gunners found their places and waited for the word of the general.

I lay behind the mud-bank and watched the English fire, the sheets of flame, the puffs of thick, black smoke, the whistling of the rockets, the chuff! chuff! as a twenty-four-pound chunk of iron buried itself in our mud-bank. The smoke quickly gathered in a vast cloud that overhung English and Americans alike and the air grew dim.

I saw the general walking coolly along our lines, now ready and calm, and I saw his lips move for the word of fire, though I could not hear. A twelve-pounder was fired from our front, and then all our batteries followed with the familiar rolling crash. The thunder doubled and the sight increased in magnificence and terror. Battery was now replying to battery, and a continuous blaze on one side faced a continuous blaze on the other. Our cotton bales were knocked into the air as if they had been pieces of pine wood, and our cannon balls crashed through their hogsheads as if they were so much thin plank, sending the sugar flying yards above the heads of the men. People will tell you that we used cotton bales in the great battle itself, but it is not so, they were proved useless in this preliminary cannonade.

"Give me a share of that mud," said Courtenay, pressing himself down beside Mercer and me, where he could see. As we were not gunners and not needed, we could watch the artillery duel, which was growing hotter and noisier. Our lines and those of the enemy were close together, and the sheets of flame seemed to meet midway and blend. The smoke bank above us thickened and darkened, but the streams of fire like lightning cut through it. We could hear the shouting, dull and muffled, but we could not tell its meaning. What was passing in the enemy's lines, whether our balls were aimed

true, we did not know, but on our side the lead was beginning to strike. One of our best guns was knocked off its wheels, some of the gunners were killed, and the cotton bales, now on fire, sent up their smoke to mingle with the impenetrable pall which overhung us; two powder carriages blew up with a roar that stunned us for a minute, and flying fragments fell about us; but despite wounds and explosions our gunners worked on, loading and firing so fast that men stood ready with buckets of water to cool the heated cannon. I tried to speak to my comrades, but the words were soundless amid the thunder of the greatest cannonade yet heard in America.

The combat assumed a strange phase; not only were the hostile lines hidden from each other, but also the space between, save when the gush of flame from the guns drove the smoke apart for a moment. As we could not see what was passing in the British lines, they could not see what was passing in ours, and there was nothing for us to do but pound away with all the might of our guns at the place where we knew the enemy ought to be. This we did, and the roll of the cannonade was steady and unbroken until about the noon hour, when we began to notice a decrease of the enemy's fire. Then it slackened so fast that the general gave our gunners the order to cease firing entirely, an action which the enemy imitated quickly, and the stunning tumult which had lasted so long was succeeded only by the voices of men. We waited, and when the clouds rose a spontaneous cheer burst from our army. We had beaten them through and through at the guns.

Their new batteries of heavy cannon had been hammered to pieces and were now masses of *débris*, mixed mud, and broken iron, while their gunners lay hidden in the ditch behind them, and on all sides the columns that had been thrown forward expecting to charge us when our fire was silenced by theirs were fleeing to the shelter of their main lines, hastened in their flight by an occasional

shot from our twelve and twenty-four pounders. We repeated our cheer, and there was joy in the ragged ranks of our backwoodsmen and Creoles, for another formidable attempt of the enemy had been beaten and our hopes were rising steadily.

"Their war cry on this campaign is Beauty and Booty," said Courtenay that night as we ate supper together; "but they'll have to be patient before they get either. I wonder what that confident kinsman of yours, Phil, is saying to these rude delays."

I could easily guess Major Northcote's state of mind and how he must be raging at the caution of the British commander. Once again the next day, when scouting, I thought I saw him on one of their breastworks examining us through his telescope, but I was not sure.

The cannon now took a rest, and it was wheelbarrows and spades, spades and wheelbarrows again as we strengthened our lines and prepared for the fight that was yet to come, for all these we knew were the preliminaries—Christmas and New Year fireworks.

"If ever again I get a chance to clean myself of this black delta mud," said Mercer, "I shall give thanks."

Two or three days passed, and there was another shout of joy from the men who manned the works. The Kentuckians had come at last! delayed through no fault of theirs and only four days before the great battle, but in time! Here they were, landed at the levee in the city and marching now to join us, twenty-two hundred strong. But the shout of joy gave way to a groan of dismay. It was twenty-two hundred skeletons, not men, that were coming to help us. They were wasted and yellowed by malarial fevers, thinned by scanty food; they held their rags upon them with their hands to cover their nakedness, and, worst of all, only one man in ten was well armed—only one man in three armed at all. Their muskets and rifles were loaded somewhere on a flatboat, which arrived in New Orleans just one month after the

war was over. How the general swore when the news came to him! I hear much nowadays of the oaths of the mates on Mississippi River steamboats, but I am sure the best of them would blush for his lack of expression could he have been there to hear General Jackson. The merchants and the people of New Orleans had to buy clothes for them, arms were found for some, and what they lacked in equipment they tried to make up in spirit and courage.

Cyrus Pendleton was among the Kentuckians, an animating spirit, eager, fiery, and sure of victory when he found that we had been holding the British army in check.

"Did Marian send any message to me?" I asked at last.

"That she expected you to come back a victor!"

That was all, but it was sufficient for me that there was any, and I knew now that what she would say he would say too. But little time was left for talk about things in Kentucky, since neither side was resting. The British cut a canal from the Bayou Bienvenu across the soft mud of the plain to the Mississippi, thus getting their light boats into the river, and we had to send a new force to the other bank to meet them, but we still prepared for the main attack on the east bank. Our whole force on both sides of the river was about five thousand men, against which the enemy could bring double that number.

The night of the 7th of January came on, cold, dark, and foggy. The noises of the day, the crackling fire of the skirmishers ceased. The diggers were tired and threw down spade and shovel. The men, worn with work, talked but little, and smoked their pipes or slept. A veil of fog hung over the river, and before us the British army was invisible; only a few spear points of light twinkled through the foggy dusk. It was the ominous stillness which one associates with coming thunder.

I lay down and slept. My booted feet rested in two inches of water, but I had grown used to such things and did not care. Through the hours of fog and dusk and cold I slept, and far toward morning I felt Courtenay pulling at me.

“Get up, Phil; the time has come.”

From the rampart of mud some one called:

“It’s six o’clock of a foggy morning, and the English army is advancing!”

CHAPTER XXXI.

THE EIGHTH OF JANUARY, 1815.

I LOOKED out upon a plain covered with rolling clouds of fog and saw nothing living. A stream of fire shot up, curved, fell, and was lost in the mist.

"A signal rocket," said Courtenay, who stood beside me.

"That was the first, and this is the second," said Mercer, as another rocket whizzed aloft, curved widely, and fell, to be lost like the other in the fog.

Then silence.

"Put your ear to the earthwork, Phil," said Courtenay.

I obeyed, and heard a faint, far rumble—the tramp of marching thousands.

"Before night the British will be in New Orleans or in hell," said a wild Tennessean.

Some soldiers seized the brands of our camp fire and threw them together. They blazed up and flickered along our line, showing the faces of the men, fierce and wild in the fog and the quivering light, the Creoles, the Baratarians, the regulars and the marines at the cannon, free negroes, San Domingans, a dozen of Napoleon's old soldiers in charge of a brass cannon, the Tennesseans and the Kentuckians, in brown homespun, lining the breastwork in fours rows, long rifle in hand; then Coffee's Indian fighters, standing knee-deep in the black mud and water of a swamp—only four thousand of us altogether, but filled with the indomitable spirit of Jackson. All were intent, eager, listening.

I put my ear to the earthwork and the rumble grew louder. Through the mists came the music of many bands, rising above the tramp of marching feet. It was dance music, a merry note, and my wilful foot moved to the tune. Suddenly, above the melody, rose a wild, wailing strain.

"That's the bagpipe of the Highlanders, always the bravest soldiers of the British army," said Mercer.

Our lines stood unmoved, and but few sounds came from them—the clank of a sword, a command, an oath, a laugh, and the murmur of an army which never ceases.

"Where is the sun?" asked Courtenay.

There it was, above the horizon, but a pale, yellow blur in the fog, and still we could see nothing living, though the rumble grew louder and the music of the bands and the wailing of the bagpipes came clearly through the fog. The man on the rampart of mud had spoken truly; the British army, the whole of it, was advancing. Pakenham, goaded by Cochrane, the admiral who had given the command to burn and destroy every American town that could be reached, had ordered the attack. It was this ferocious old man who had told Pakenham that if the army could not take the mud banks of the Americans he would do it with the marines. What a pity that the two could not have exchanged places that day, and the better would have been spared!

"How are we to fire through all this fog!" grumbled Cyrus Pendleton as he knocked against my elbow.

But the answer was ready for him, the drifting fog was lifting, drawing slowly away from the plain as if reluctant to go. The music came louder, and through the fog appeared a faint red glimmer, the vanguard of the British army. The sudden deep-mouthed note of a cannon, thirty yards to my left, boomed over the plain, the first gun of the battle. Then there was silence again, save the far note and rumble of the bands and the bagpipes, for after the single cannon shot the fog settled

back again, heavy, impenetrable, and the red gleam was gone.

Tramp! tramp! tramp! we could hear them advancing, and the music grew loud and triumphant.

"The nearer they come, the better for our marksmen," Cyrus Pendleton muttered.

As far to left and right as I could see our men were motionless, the Kentuckians and Tennesseans bent over until they stooped, their rifles grasped in their hands, each a perfect type of the forest fighter who awaits his enemy and listens for his coming.

The music of the bands, played in perfect tune, swelled over the plain and filled our ears. The fog swung away from the earth again and rose slowly; then, caught by some stray wind, it whirled up in clouds, and the plain lay before us, covered with the British army, a multitude gleaming in red, yellow, and green, English, Scotch, Irish, Welsh, the sunshine flashing on swords and bayonets, their deep columns flanked by artillery. On they came in perfect order, the bands still playing, but their music lost now in the tremendous cheering of many thousand men who advanced in even lines to what they thought was not much more than a dress parade.

"What a magnificent sight!" said Mercer.

"Magnificent, truly," replied Courtenay, "but much more magnificent than it will be a half hour from now!"

Again they opened fire with their whistling rockets, some of which shrieked far over our heads, and the artillery on their flanks began to add a deeper note. The mud in our embankment was spattered high, and some drops striking me in the face burnt like powder. A battery, the nearest of ours to me, replied to them, and two more followed with their fiery salute. The smoke drove the fog upward and took its place. The British, their cheers thundering above the artillery, came on with firmness and precision; the cannon balls were smashing into their front lines and men were falling, but others took

their places, and still they came in solid ranks, drums beating, bands playing, bagpipes wailing, and bayonets shining. The smoke was not yet dense enough to hide the sun, and it gleamed over that multitude on the plain, intensifying the colours of arms, banners, and uniforms as if they were the legions decked for a Roman triumph. They came so steadily and so firmly that for a moment I felt a pride in them, because I too had Anglo-Saxon blood in me, and now I knew why the soldiers of the European Continent, man for man, could seldom stand before them. Yet the British line was dripping blood, and all the front of it was spattered. The first rank was burnt away by the cannon fire, but the second took its place. It seemed to me that I could hear the bones cracking under the shower of lead from our artillery, and a body would shoot up under the impact of a cannon ball, and then fall back to the earth. But the British regiments, scorched and bleeding, were cheering each other, closing up their shot-torn ranks, and coming on at the same steady pace. The music of the bands and the roar of the artillery mingled with the shouting of men and whistling of projectiles, and became an unbroken tumult.

Our riflemen were not yet allowed to fire, and I turned my eyes again from the terrible, yet magnificent spectacle in front of us to our lines. Looking upon them I saw that this was a new race of men, different from the old races of Europe, tall, lean, big boned, alert, masters of themselves, upon all the stamp of the American West. They were bent farther over now, each man clasping his rifle in nervous fingers, intent eyes on the advancing enemy, something of the North American Indian in every face. I saw with the suddenness of inspiration the fate that awaited the British army when it came within the range of those rifles, and I shuddered for brave men.

“Good God, what a mark to shoot at!” said the wild Tennessean near me.

He raised his rifle, I heard its short whiplike crack in my ear even though the artillery was roaring around me, and I saw an officer directly in front of me fall from his horse. But no other rifle was fired, and an officer rebuked him sharply for his shot. The cannon were doing the work, and the rifles were reserved for shorter range. Along our whole line they were loading and firing the great guns now, and the discharges crashed out all at once sometimes, then ran from right to left or from left to right in a rolling fire, like the crash of incessant thunder. I watched the flame as it blazed along our embankment like sheet lightning, or gushed out like the explosion of a magazine.

Over our heads the smoke cloud thickened and blackened, but as yet it hung high, and the advancing enemy could be seen plainly; their front lines were burnt or beaten away; some of the banners had fallen with those who held them, and only the broken notes of the music came now through the roaring that filled our ears.

"They can crush Frenchmen this way, but they can not crush us!" shouted Cyrus Pendleton in my ear.

It was a boast, but it was a true one.

Behind me and around me I heard the gunlocks clicking. The frontiersmen, the boys among them, were growing impatient, but the sharp orders of the commanders kept their fingers from the triggers. I glanced again down the quadruple line of Kentuckians and Tennesseans, tanned by the sun and winter winds to the hue of Indians, the largest men in the world except the Scandinavians, and the strongest. Then I turned my eyes back upon the advancing army, which looked now like a many-coloured sea, sweeping on in a strong tide and shimmering in the sun. Furrows were smashed in the ranks by the cannon balls, but they closed up again and still presented solid columns.

The thunder of the cannon deepened and became a steady roll, for all our great guns were firing now upon

the advancing columns, and the British batteries replied with their whole strength. They discharged showers of balls and rockets, but they fell short or passed over us. The sheets of flame from our lines seemed to reach out at times and touch the fire from theirs, and the puffing smoke met, mingled, and floated upward to join the huge bank of it which was steadily thickening and darkening. Despite the tumult I could see that our balls were striking true, they sped neither too high nor too low, but were driven straight at their target, and those of the British were flying everywhere except where they were aimed. But the brigades continued to come, their ranks preserved, still cheering, though we could hear it only in broken shouts, their bands playing the martial airs which were soundless now. They advanced, columns deep, presenting a long line of glittering bayonets, and officers on foot and on horseback led them. One, a tall man, drawn sword in hand, with which he gesticulated and pointed to us, I recognised as my kinsman, Major Northcote. He was the nearest man to us, and I felt no surprise at seeing him there.

"They are within two hundred and fifty yards of us," shouted Cyrus Pendleton in my ear. "Fifty yards more, and the rifles will begin to talk."

Foot by foot they came, and by the flash of the cannon I saw their faces distinctly, and could even mark their features. Here were the English, ruddy, heavy-jawed; there the Irish, darker eyed, darker haired; yonder the Highlanders, tall, red-bearded, the set faces of them all showing through the battle flare, the blood of many of them soaking into the moist earth of the delta.

The fifty yards had been crossed, and then came the command to the riflemen to fire. Those who have heard the crack of the long-barrelled Western rifle like the lashing of a whip do not forget it, and when so many were fired at once the shriller, piercing, and, to me, more

terrible crash rose clearly above the roar of the cannon. Nor were they aimed merely at the red blur of the advancing army, for each of the riflemen was a sharpshooter and he picked his man, looking down the sights until the bead was drawn true. I may need to ask forgiveness some day for the cry of joy I uttered when I saw the result; the red line of the English reeled back for the first time; the front rank was gone, annihilated, swept down by the breath of the rifles, and the others, thrown into confusion, staggered and hesitated, while the officers rushed about trying to restore order. The second line of our riflemen stepped forward into the place of the first, poured in their fire, gave way to the third line, which fired and yielded to the fourth, which was followed by the first, guns now reloaded, and over again, one after another in perfect rotation, in a fire that was unceasing, that filled the air with whistling bullets, and went straight to the mark. It was a terrible machine that was working now, one line forward, rifles up and the hail of bullets, and then another and the bullets again, and so on without ceasing, the riflemen shouting but little, and their fire, as all who were there will tell you, rolling in waves like that of the artillery as volley followed volley. The steady clicking of the gunlocks could be heard in the roar of the battle, and the men's faces remained eager, intent eyes on their rifles, and then on the advancing squares.

The smoke clouds half hid the field, but we could see the British re-enforcements coming to the relief of the shattered vanguard. But they too were swept down by a fire as well aimed and deadly as any that was ever given in battle.

"Good Lord, this is slaughter, and all on one side!" cried Courtenay.

I knew what he meant, for as far as I could see not a single man on our side had fallen, and the plain in front of us was thickly sown with the English dead. Their columns were heaving and struggling like a

wrecked ship on the topmost wave, and a few groups, ten, a dozen, or fifteen in each, still advanced, to be picked off by the sharpshooters.

Our men began to shout and cheer, though they did it in a mechanical way, their eyes on their rifles or the enemy. Never for a moment was the precision of their fire or the regular change of the ranks disturbed; one line stepped forward in the mud, now trodden into a horrible mire, up went their rifles, then the long sheet of light and storm of bullets, and they yielded their place to another rank, to come forward again with reloaded pieces in their turn.

The British army was still reeling about and seemed to be struck with paralysis; unable to advance, unwilling to retreat, it staggered from side to side, and the squares were losing cohesion. A fringe of men dropped off, and at last began to run away. The officers were swept down by the bullets, and the plain, where we could see it, was an ooze of bloody mud. I wondered how much longer they could stand it. While they wavered there I saw an officer on horseback spur his horse through the distracted ranks to the very front. It was the gallant Pakenham, their commander in chief, and many of us guessed it by his dress. A regiment was about to run, and I saw him snatch off his hat and point toward the wall of fire in their front, as if he would tell them that was the way to go. The arm fell, broken by a rifle ball, his horse was killed under him, but he sprang upon the black pony of an aide, and I could plainly see him encouraging the regiment, which broke, however, and fled. Then he galloped toward the massive regiment of the Highlanders—ever among the bravest of men—which was still advancing steadily. We looked with admiration at their solid column, over which the sunlight fell clearly at that moment, the smoke drifting aside. Their ranks were as yet unbroken, their bagpipes playing, General Pakenham at the right of their columns, and General Gibbs, the sec-

ond in command of the army, at their left. They advanced, and a thirty-two-pound cannon, loaded to the muzzle with musket balls, was fired directly into the square, sweeping down nearly a fourth of the men, and then the rifles poured their hail upon the doomed regiment. It faltered and stopped, and the men looked about as if they knew not which way to go. Pakenham snatched off his hat again, and waving it, now in his left hand, shouted to them. His officers clustered around and helped him to encourage the men. A mass of grapeshot whistled through the air and struck in the very centre of the group. Nearly all went down, and Pakenham was dragged from the bodies, to be struck again before they could take him from the field, and to die five minutes later in the shade of an old live oak in the rear. A brave man who should have been sent on a better mission! Gibbs, too, fell and was carried off the field to die on the morrow, and then Keane, the third in command, went down, wounded in the neck and thigh, and was carried away. Their colonel was killed, but, led by the the major, these heroic Highlanders summoned up their courage and again advanced in the face of our rifles and cannon, though they came slowly. Within one hundred yards of us they stopped, and the great square stood there, kilts and tartans glittering, but again they were struck with that deadly paralysis, while the fire converged upon them and line after line crumbled away until, of the nine hundred men who had come on, less than one hundred and fifty were left, and these, recoiling as if they realized suddenly the deadly furnace into which they had advanced, fled shouting in horror and did not stop until they were hid in the ditches and black mud of the swamp.

Vast clouds of smoke floated between us and covered the fleeing Highlanders and most of the slain, but the fire of the cannon and the rifles was undiminished, sweeping the field from every point, and though we could not see

through the smoke we knew that balls and bullets still found their mark. I hoped that the next lifting of the smoke would show them in retreat, not alone for our victory but for their own sake too.

The waves of smoke rolled apart for an instant, split by the cannon fire, and disclosed the wreck that strewed the plain. Far to the right and left it was covered with red-clothed bodies; some regiments were running, others wavered upon the field, and several officers, waving their swords and followed by a few soldiers, were still rushing toward us; then the smoke clouds closed up again and we saw nothing, while the din of arms went on as ever.

Some soldiers dashed out of the fog-bank which hung to the very edge of our parapet of mud and rushed at us; one, a major, reached the top of the parapet and fell dying upon it; another, a tall figure, his face flaming with passion, stood at full height an instant upon the earthwork, then leaped into our ranks and slashed at us with his sword as he cried to us to yield.

"Surrender, cousin! Major Northcote!" I cried; "do you not see that you are alone?"

He looked around him like one dazed, like one who could not believe. Then he slashed savagely at a rifleman, and as the blow was parried on a gun barrel he fell, for he was pierced already with many wounds, and died at my feet. On that very spot, within our lines, where he had come alone, he was buried, by permission of General Jackson, and as a mark of respect for his bravery, many cannon were driven over his grave.

The whole field was now covered by the smoke, and it was so thick that the flare of the cannon and rifles did not cut a way through it, and no sound came to us but the steady roar of the great guns and the crack of the rifles. Mr. Pendleton suddenly put his ear to the earthwork, and, seeing him, I did the same.

"What do you hear?" he asked.

"Nothing but the cannonade."

"No rumble, no tread of advancing footsteps?"

"No."

"Neither do I; the British army has fled."

The smoke-bank still hung before us, dense, imperious, but no human form, nothing came from it. It enveloped alike the dead, who lay where they fell, and the living, who came no farther.

Slowly our fire died, and a breeze rising from the river began to move the heavy banks of smoke and drive them away. As they lifted the first sight disclosed to us was the rows and heaps of dead, and the wounded who crawled about on the plain.

"Twenty-five minutes," said Courtenay, shutting his watch with a snap.

"What do you mean by twenty-five minutes?" I asked.

"Only twenty-five minutes since the first gun was fired, and we've won the greatest victory in our history."

But from the front came the defiant note of a bugle. Clear and shrill it swelled above our waning fire, and many of the men raised their rifles.

Ta-ra-ra! ta-ra-ra! rang the bugle note, gay, saucy, and defiant.

"Can they have returned to the attack?" I asked in amazement.

"Impossible," said Cyrus Pendleton; "wait!"

The roof of smoke lifted higher and higher, and still the defiant bugle note, never ceasing, rang out. A laugh and a cheer alike rose from our lines when we saw the cause; a little English boy, a bugler charging with his company, had climbed a tree in the plain in front of us and there he remained throughout the battle, blowing his bugle for the charge, and there he was now, perched astride the one bough that the cannon balls had left on the tree, his bugle at his lips, while he blew the notes which called upon his comrades to charge once more over

the field which he held alone. Some riflemen went out, took down the little soldier, and adopted him.

Up went the clouds and the whole field now lay before us, covered with bodies and soaked with blood. The wounded crawled to us for help, and many unhurt, who had lain flat upon the ground to escape the bullets, came in and surrendered.

The smoke receded farther, and showed us the faint red gleam of the retreating British columns, some of them columns no longer, just huddles of fleeing men, but as far as we could see the field was thickly sown with the dead and wounded. Some of the heaps moved, and an unhurt man who had been stricken down by fear would come forth to surrender. The groans of the wounded made an unceasing lament, a sickening odour of blood arose, and little whiffs of smoke, like the haze of fever swamps, floated about.

I felt, first, that we had paid them back for all we had suffered from them, and then pity.

The red blur of the retreating enemy disappeared under the horizon, and our general passed along the lines praising the courage and marksmanship of all. Then we went out to help the wounded and to bring them in, and in all that astonishing battle only seven men of ours were killed.

Thus we held New Orleans, and the beaten enemy fleeing to his ships soon left our shores, the last foe that has ever been seen upon them. In a short time the news of the peace came—a peace honourable and glorious to us, for in war with the strongest nation of Europe we had shown that we feared no one, either by sea or land, and were prepared to hold our own at any price. We had shown, moreover, that we would protect our rights wherever they existed, that the seas were free to all, and that one country could not rob another of its people merely because it needed them. All the principles for which we fought against immense odds have become the acknowl-

edged laws of civilization and humanity, just as those for which we fought in the Revolution are now the birth-right of the Anglo-Saxon race, and none to-day would question them.

Since then no European power has dared to molest us, and I do not think that any one will fight us with arms, though they continue the old campaign of falsehood and abuse. And if Europe should feel aggrieved sometimes because we do not like her, she should remember that she was the cause of it, and thus we leave her to her mass of intrigue and lying which she calls diplomacy and to her standard of manners instead of morals.

But I know the old powers will never forgive us for not standing in awe of them, the last insult to boastful nations.

Nevertheless, I have this to say of the English: I think them the best people in Europe, the only steadfast friends that freedom and the right have there, and though we have quarrelled with them and fought with them and scolded them and been scolded by them, yet we pay them the highest compliment of boasting of no victories, save those we have won over them, and we are glad that we were their colonies and those of no other country. And as I see the better England conquering the worse and leading the nation in the path of justice, I have a little wish, and perhaps an equal hope, that we shall stand together again, and always for the right.

G. E. McClure.

CHAPTER XXXII.

A GIRL IN WHITE.

THE spring had come again and was ripening into summer when I rode through the gentle sweep of the blue grass toward a house just under the edge of the horizon. The battle smoke was far behind and forgotten, and there was nothing around me but peace, nothing to tell of the muddy delta, the black swamps, and the field of the dead a thousand miles away, only the green grass and the wild flowers rippling under a gentle west wind, and the lazy cattle lying beside a brook flowing in coils of burnished silver through the meadows.

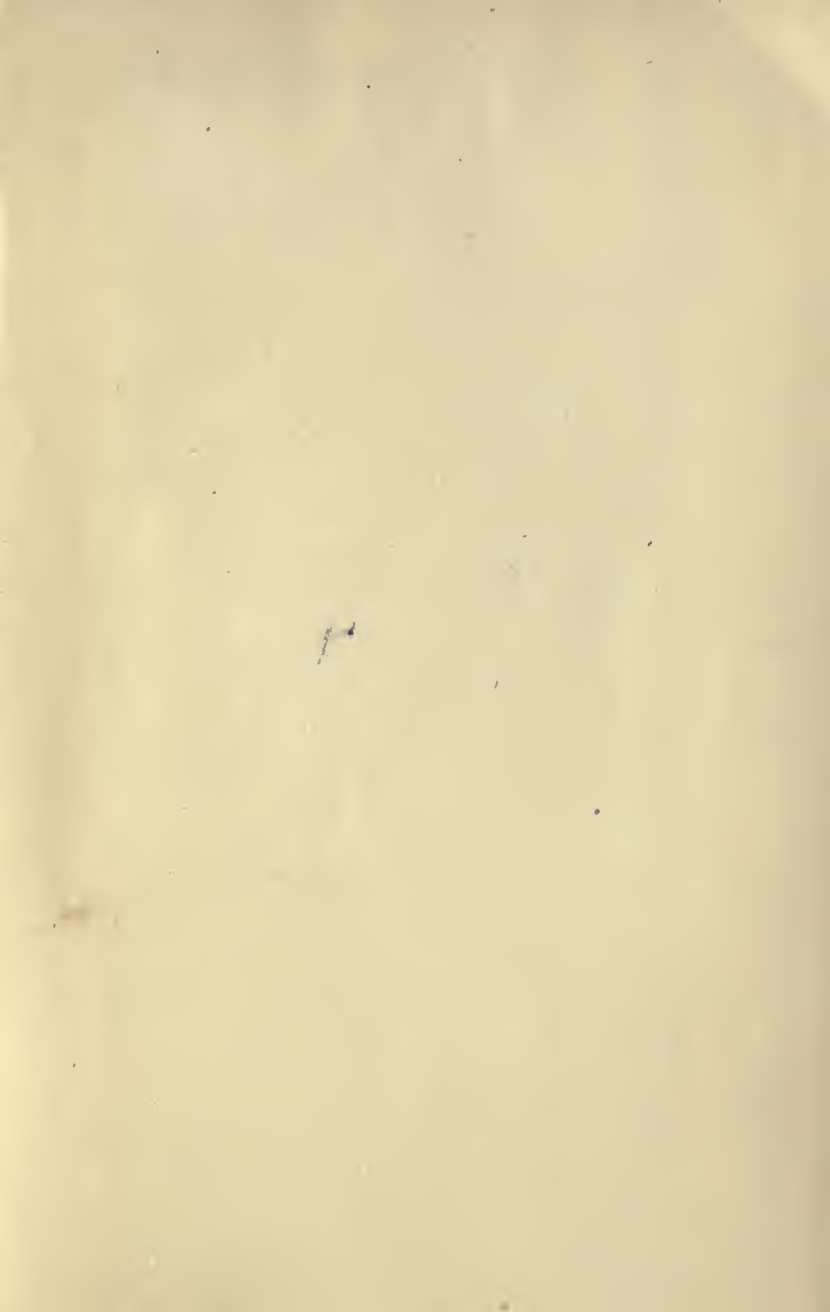
I rode on and the west wind sang in my ears. The old earth had blossomed again and put on her most beautiful colours. Afar gleamed the pink cone of a peach tree in bloom, and some flowers twining about a stone fence shone in blue and red.

I approached the house and in front of it, among the flowers, a tall girl in white, with a red rose in her hair, awaited me. When I took her hands in mine, I said:

"Marian, I have come back again, and I come for my answer."

And then, as her face took the hue of the red rose in her hair, she spoke softly, but not so softly that I could not hear, the answer that I wished.

J. E. McNamee.



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